APRIL–JUNE 1961

Crossroads

A Study and Program Magazine for Adults

VOLUME 11 : NUMBER 3

OUR cover features a gilded bronze statuette of Jesus Christ in chains. The statuette appears against a background of ominous black. The chain, the symbolic gold, the anguished Christ in the midst of an absorbing darkness, stir Christian man's imagination to examine his slumbering image of a victorious Jesus safe from evil in the heavens. CROSSROADS readers will have ample opportunity this quarter to deal with the Jesus Christ of the New Testament, who defeated evil by submitting to its chain, overcame darkness, and thus was granted the crown of a *king*. The cover picture, therefore, will have served its purpose if readers are led to the contemplation of the One who was God's true man and his only Son. This contemplation will be deepened by careful contemplation of the unit of articles beginning on page 27. These articles first appeared in CROSSROADS in 1952 and have been as thought-provoking and well received as any ever printed in the magazine. On The Letter of Paul to the Romans, these articles are filled necessarily with that great letter's witness to Jesus Christ. We have modified the original articles slightly (and have condensed them), but they remain basically unaltered. With pride we reprint them in this issue of CROSSROADS.

Portions of two books add significance to the "Parents' Discussion Group" materials. These selections deserve a wide reading and should not be branded by CROSSROADS readers as just for parents. Edgar Friedenberg's *The Vanishing Adolescent* represents one of the most sober, helpful, crystal-clear analyses of adolescence we have ever read. Responsible adults who have nice, *inherited* ideas about teen-agers should allow the brilliant Mr. Friedenberg to show them a few things about a subject that can never be safely passed off with inherited ideas.

The other book, also marked by brilliant analysis and great intensity, is Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd*. In Mr. Goodman's view, the workers of tomorrow will be more cheated than the workers of today simply because they will be faced even more with the dulling, frustrating, sad prospect of doing work that the world could very well do without—meaningless work. Christians who have any concern with young people and the future of the society they live in should ponder this book thoughtfully

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Crossroads

A STUDY AND PROGRAM MAGAZINE FOR ADULTS

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Christ at the Column, statuette by Johann Baptist Hagenauer.

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Adult study can be enriched in many ways. One group experimented in the use of art as they faced the question—

JESUS MOCKED
By Georges Rouault

Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York

Who Is Jesus Christ?

By Lindell L. Sawyers

TWENTY adults had been meeting for a series of Monday-evening sessions centering around the question discussed in a recent book, *Who Is Jesus Christ?* by Stephen Neill (Association Press, 1956; $1.25). The question had been considered from the points of view of Scripture, of the doctrine of the church, and of the personal experience of the group members. One of the people in the group, who was particularly interested in art, suggested that it might be worth-while to see how several artists answered the question, "Who is Jesus Christ?" So this group member collaborated with the discussion leader to plan an "experience" in religious art for the other members of the group. Here is how they went about it:

Reproductions of eleven religious masterpieces were assembled, including works by Georges Rouault, Emil Nolde, Wolf Huber, Eugene Delacroix, Piero della Francesca, Rembrandt, Tintoretto, Duccio, and Salvador Dali. The reproductions were not large and fancy; they were simply clipped out of periodicals—the Feb., 1959, issue of the *International Journal of Religious Education* on "Art in Christian Education," and back issues of *Presbyterian Life* and of just plain *Life*.

The clippings of paintings were mounted on pieces of stiff cardboard so that they could be displayed and passed from one member of the group to another. All pictures were representations of events in the life of Christ. They were all numbered for purposes of identification, but the names of the paintings and of the artists were not included because these might have influenced the response of the members to the pictures themselves. One criterion operating in the selection of pictures was that of choosing a number of unusual

CHRIST ON THE SEA OF GALILEE

By Eugene Delacroix

THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS, *by Rembrandt*

and difficult paintings instead of familiar or "easy to look at" works.

The eleven pictures were displayed, and members of the group were invited to examine them at their leisure. Each person was to "respond" to the representations of Christ and to attempt to discover, if possible, the answers of the various artists to the question, "Who is Jesus Christ?" The pictures were identified at the end of the meeting, but only after the group members had discussed and shared their responses.

What did the people have to say about the paintings? They were not reserved in their comments; they said what was on their minds, and their responses are revealing not only of what the painter was portraying, but also of their own emotions and sentiments. In fact, one member of the group suspected that the leader was administering some sort of psychological test.

Bringer of Peace and Calm

Which paintings did the group respond to most favorably? *Christ on the Sea of Galilee,* by Delacroix, rated very high, producing such comments as these:

"Strikes a very responsive chord in me . . . the fear and despair in the disciples' faces in contrast to the restful serenity of the sleeping Jesus."

"I like this one very much—the feeling of terror in the disciples is evident while Jesus is sleeping peacefully."

"The storm rages furiously and Jesus has no fear."

"The storm—Christ at ease while others panic—meaning to me—trust in the Lord."

"The most realistic. Depicts well the rolling sea, the disturbed men, and the relaxed Jesus. The man beside Jesus is resting? maybe sick?"

These and other comments reflect the confusing and disturbing times in which we live. Because of inner and outer turmoil, many persons tend to respond most willingly to the Christ who stills the tempest and brings peace and calm.

The members of the group rather freely interpreted *The Supper at Emmaus,* by Rembrandt. Some of them said:

"Jesus dining with friends—I would have imagined a gayer scene."

"Jesus in some intimate, small group. Large building, though, so it couldn't be a home."

"Jesus at dinner at someone's home—a very inspiring picture—seems to show the holiness of Jesus."

"I'm puzzled by expression on Jesus' face, but I like the picture and the way everyone is looking at him and sight is centered there."

"The disciples are startled to see the risen Lord. Jesus has an unearthly look in his eyes."

The pictures proved to be something of a quiz on the life of Jesus. Often members of the group had difficulty identifying the event being portrayed. An example of this is a response to *Christ Tempted by the Devil,* by Tintoretto: "This one confuses me. Don't know the character with the rocks!"

The Suffering Servant

As interesting as these responses are, the most profound reactions, in the opinion of the leader, were the negative, rejecting responses brought out by two paintings done by Georges Rouault. Here are some sample expressions of the reaction to *Christ Mocked by Soldiers:*

"Ugly."

"I'll stick to the old masters!"

"Too grotesque. Doesn't convey the warmth that should come from a painting of Jesus."

"Picture conveys no meaning to me."

"Not to my liking—the face of Jesus is very sad—painting seems out of proportion."

"Heavy, earthy feeling."

"Colors are rich and thick. Jesus stands out . . . enduring silently his torturers—soldiers are grotesque—the Lord is strong."

When *Jesus Mocked* was studied, reactions included:

"If it is Jesus, he looks wistful and sorrowful. Might be a painting I could remember."

"A monstrosity conveying absolutely no religious meaning to me. It may represent Christ, as I think I can detect a semblance of a crown of thorns and sad eyes, but it could just as well be a skid-row bum, sorry for himself."

"A sloppy mess."

"Ugh! This is not a religious painting to me."

"Most moving picture of the suffering Christ I've ever seen—the drawn face, sad but compassionate. Determination in his jaw."

To understand these responses, of course, one must realize that in matters of taste there is little agreement.

CHRIST TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL
By Tintoretto

CHRIST MOCKED BY SOLDIERS
By Georges Rouault

Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York. Given anonymously.

The style of contemporary artists does not communicate much, if anything, to many people, as is indicated by the comments reported above.

There is an issue, however, that is deeper than questions of aesthetic appreciation. The responses to Rouault's paintings may indicate that there is something very disturbing about the *suffering* Christ to the modern Christian. Christ the teacher, Christ the dinner guest, Christ the stiller of tempests—these images can be assimilated. But the vision of Christ's suffering is almost unbearable. The reaction is not surprising. It is not peculiar to this particular group of adults. It is the response of every sensitive person to the suffering of others, for there is no beauty in pain, no radiance in anguish. Men turn their eyes away from such a sight. As described in the ancient poetry of Isaiah (*ch. 53: 3*):

"He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Rouault's paintings repelled the group; but perhap that reflects the greatness of the artist, in his abilit to convey the reality of Christ's humanity—which i ugly in suffering. Rouault did not aim at a sentimenta portrayal of Jesus Christ; he sought to portray th depths of human experience.

Who is Jesus Christ? An artist may reflect his an swer in his work; Christians, through whatever voca tion or occupation, in the love of God and of thei neighbors. The group came to no consensus of opinion The question demands the response of the lonely in dividual to the living God.

THEOLOGY FOR THE LAYMAN

By Robert McAfee Brown

In 1956, when The Westminster Press first began issuing a series of books called the Layman's Theological Library, there were objections from certain quarters that the title represented a contradiction in terms. It was felt that the word "layman" and the word "theology" canceled each other out. Theology, it was argued, was the province of the "specialist," the theologian, the man who could get excited about angels dancing on pinheads, or iota subscripts changing the course of Christian history. The layman, it was further argued, couldn't care less about theology. To be sure, he was interested in the simple teachings of Jesus and the social message of the prophets. But theology? Don't burden the layman, the argument concluded, with subtleties beyond his concern or his comprehension.

Every Believer's Obligation

That this obligation represents a misunderstanding—and a drastic misunderstanding—of both words, should be evident to anyone who will examine the matter even for a moment. We need not define theology in sophisticated or specialist terms in order to make the point. We may simply say that theology represents the attempt of the believer to *love God with his mind,* as well as with his heart and soul and strength. To love God with the mind is not the sole concern of the believer, to be sure. But, by the same token, it is not enough simply to love God with the heart, although a lot of recent sentimental religious literature apparently seeks to belie such a statement. Therefore, the individual who feels in some way touched by the reality of God's presence has placed upon him the obligation to think through as honestly and as rigorously as possible what this impingement of God upon his life really means.

For this reason a second fairly pedestrian definition of theology (although hallowed by centuries of tradition) is useful—a description of the task of theology as "faith seeking understanding." This phrase was used by Anselm in the eleventh century, and is implicit in formulations of Augustine in the fourth century, who got it from Jerome's Vulgate, where it is found in the pre-Christian writings of Isaiah. From an early date, in other words, it has been insisted that it is not enough for the Christian (or the church) simply to "have faith," or even to possess a commodity described, often nostalgically, as "simple faith." Whatever degree of faith, of commitment to God, the individual or the church possesses must be subjected to rigorous scrutiny. The affirmations of faith must be open to examination and cross-examination. Where this privilege has been denied, faith has petrified into rigid and sterile orthodoxy. When the privilege has been claimed as a right and indeed an obligation, faith has been fresh and creative.

All of this should indicate why, particularly to the Protestant, theology and the layman cannot be divorced. Because if theology is the attempt to love God with the mind, if it is faith seeking understanding, then this is clearly not a task which can be relegated to the experts alone, since we all have minds and we all seek to understand. This is the obligation placed upon every believer who does not choose merely to remain mute. For the moment he begins to talk or even to reflect to himself about his faith, he has become for

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better or for worse a theologian. His option is never "Shall I be a theologian or not?" His option is only "Will I be a good theologian or a bad theologian?" And while he can (let us hope) derive some real help from the "experts," he cannot rely solely upon them, which is to say only that he cannot finally have his faith secondhand. What they assert must be something that he too can assert as having meaning *for him,* and this he can only do if he has wrestled, really wrestled, in his very inmost being, with the meaning of his life, and more importantly the meaning of his life before God.

So there is no anomaly in referring to a "Layman's Theological Library." There is an inextricable connection between the two.

Writing for Laymen

Recently churchmen and even theologians have become aware of this situation and have realized that the theologians have been largely (and wrongly) content to write simply for one another, experts writing for experts. This means that the layman who is venturesome enough to expose himself to current theological thinking is likely to find his initial suspicion of the irrelevance of theology confirmed, for when he turns to the professional theologians he finds them talking a strange language, and he wonders what such language has to do with mature faith, let alone "simple" faith.

If the theologians are responsible for this hiatus between their concerns and the concerns of the laymen, it is clearly part of the theologians' responsibility to bridge the gap, and there are some encouraging signs that this is beginning to happen. Several lessons emerge from these attempts which are worth pointing out here:

1. It is clear that there is no such static creature as "the intelligent layman" to whom most religious writing these days claims to be addressed (see innumerable prefaces and dust jackets). The levels of intelligence are various; what is one man's theological meat is clearly another man's spiritual poison. A book which is a "clincher" for one person seeking a faith will leave another reader cold.

2. The search for intelligibility and communicability must not be pressed to the point where the *content* of what is being communicated gets distorted. The layman's justifiable plea to "keep things simple" is also a dangerous request. If a book on religion leaves him with no more questions, he has probably grasped something which is at a far remove from authentic faith. The doctrine of the Trinity, for example, is not "simple," and the problem of the writer is not just to strip away some fourth-century terminology so that the Trinity will be "easy to understand," but to show why a mystery has meaning even when it remains a mystery. And the difficulty with much of the "popular" religious writing of the day—the kind that makes the best-seller lists—is that it has provided a "simple" and "understandable" faith, all right, but hardly a faith that makes any difference, or is worth believing, or really grapples with the deepest issues of human life and destiny.

3. It is almost impossible to talk about the Christian faith, at any rate, without the use of some "traditional" terminology. (Paul Tillich comes the closest to succeeding here, but there is only one of him to go around.) This poses an almost insuperable barrier to modern readers, who want things explained in psychiatric terms, or sociological terms, but who are immediately put off by theological terms. Any theologian writing for laymen may fruitfully draw upon psychiatry or sociology to illumine what he is trying to talk about, but the layman must be willing to admit as one of the ground rules of the game that the kind of language peculiar to theological discussion also be allowed. The old terms need new definitions, to be sure, and perhaps some of them have had their day and can be forgotten, but there are some "theological words" with such rich associations and meanings that there is no adequate "secular" substitute, and a contemporary man should be willing to explore such words with some thoroughness before he arbitrarily discards them as not more than relics of an outworn past.

A New World

The layman, then, while he has a right to demand that the theologian speak to the layman in the world where the layman actually lives, must also have the openness to let the theologian describe what may be a new world for the layman. And if the layman can have this openness, he may discover that the new world, which he has long resisted, is the world to which, in the deepest sense, he truly belongs.

THEOLOGY FOR THE LAYMAN— TO BE SPECIFIC

Among some of the recent attempts to carry on the task of communicating to laymen are the series and individual volumes suggested below. Obviously, the abundance of books that are becoming available prohibits any comprehensive listing here.

Layman's Theological Library, a series of twelve 96-page volumes, each $1.00, published by The Westminster Press, includes:

Believing in God, by Daniel Jenkins; *The Meaning of Christ,* by Robert Clyde Johnson; *Understanding the Bible,* by Fred J. Denbeaux; *The Significance of the Church,* by Robert McAfee Brown; *Barriers to Belief,* by Norman F. Langford; *The Christian Man,* by William Hamilton; *Making Ethical Decisions,* by Howard Clark Kee; *Prayer and Personal Religion,* by John B. Coburn; *The Protestant and Politics,* by William Lee Miller; *Life, Death, and Destiny,* by Roger L. Shinn; *Modern Rivals to Christian Faith,* by Cornelius Loew; and *A Faith for the Nations,* by Charles W. Forman. Free study guides are now available for all of these, upon request from Westminster Book Stores.

Another series being published by The Westminster

Press, similar to the Layman's Theological Library, is ntitled "Westminster Guides to the Bible." This series ill include nine 96-page volumes, each $1.50 (those narked with an asterisk are available now; the others n the near future):

The Bible and the Church: An Approach to Scripure, by Samuel Terrien; *You Shall Be My People: The Books of Covenant and Law,** by Edwin M. Good; *The Story of Israel: From Joshua to Alexander the Great,** by Stephen Szikszai; *Servants of the Word: The Prophets of Israel,* by James D. Smart; *The Way of the Righteous: Psalms and the Books of Wisdom,* by John William Wevers; *The Threshold of Christianity: Between the Testaments,** by Lawrence E. Toombs; *Jesus and God's New People: The Four Gospels,** by Howard Clark Kee; *Light for the Gentiles: Paul and the Growing Church,* by Leland Jamison; *The Church Faces the World: Late New Testament Writings,* by J. Christiaan Beker.

The Christian Faith Series, published by Doubleday & Company, Inc., with Reinhold Niebuhr as consulting Editor, is a "next-step" above the Layman's Theological Library in terms of difficulty:

The Renewal of Man, by Alexander Miller ($2.95); *Man's Knowledge of God,* by William J. Wolf ($2.95); *Doing the Truth,* by James A. Pike ($2.95); *Hardness of Heart,* by E. La B. Cherbonnier ($2.95); *The Strangeness of the Church,* by Daniel Jenkins ($2.95); *The Two Cities,* by John A. Hutchison ($3.50); *The Book of The Acts of God,* by G. Ernest Wright and Reginald H. Fuller ($4.95).

Association Press has presented a series of popular paperbacks, selling for 50 cents each, and clearly designed for the lay market. A good many of these are reprints or condensations of earlier books which have already proven their worth. Among these titles are:

The Unfolding Drama of the Bible, by Bernhard W. Anderson; *A Short Primer for Protestants,* by James H. Nichols; *God and the Day's Work,* by Robert Calhoun; *What Christianity Says About Sex, Love, and Marriage,* by Roland H. Bainton; *What the Christian Hopes For in Society,* edited by Wayne Cowan; *What Archaeology Says About the Bible,* by Albert N. Williams.

Association Press has also sponsored World Christian Books, a series of small hard-cover books, edited by Bishop Stephen Neill, selling for $1.25 each. The series has great variety, and some of the titles are:

The Christian as Citizen, by John Bennett; *Jesus and His People,* by Paul Minear; *The Christian Character* and *The Christian's God,* by Stephen C. Neill; *Christianity and Science,* by Charles E. Raven; *Reading the Bible Today,* by D. T. Niles.

It is hardly necessary to note that some very good books have begun to make their way into the "sophisticated paperback" set, and many of these, although they may not originally have been written with laymen in mind, are the sort of thing that can offer real challenge and excitement to the layman who is ready to have his mind stretched. The Living Age Books, of Meridian Books, have been particularly noteworthy. A few titles follow:

The Mind of the Maker, by Dorothy L. Sayers ($1.35); *The Descent of the Dove,* by Charles Williams ($1.35); *The Religious Situation,* by Paul Tillich ($1.25); *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* ($1.25); *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* ($1.35).

A good many single volumes are also clearly designed for laymen. The many published works of C. S. Lewis, J. B. Phillips, and Chad Walsh are indicative of an established group of writers who have been of particular help in "communicating" to laymen. Another work which can help to orient the inquiring reader is *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology,* by William Hordern (The Macmillan Company, $3.50). And the person who wants to make a direct venture into some of the outstanding Protestant theologians themselves can hardly do better than to start with such volumes as Paul Tillich's *The Shaking of the Foundations* (Charles Scribner's Sons, $2.95) or Reinhold Niebuhr's *Beyond Tragedy* (Charles Scribner's Sons, $3.95), which have been with us long enough to prove their worth.

For the Untheological

By Dona Cooper

Monday I must make a salad
For Circle number ten.
Tuesday's Bible Study—
It's our turn to serve again.
Wednesday night is Mariners—
We're in charge of chili.
Children's choir on Thursday:
"Please send cookies down with Willie."
Friday's U.P.W.—
I'll take chocolate cake.
Saturday—must order doughnuts
For post-sermon coffee-break.
Sunday eve is W.F.
They've begged for pizza pie.
And although you see me smiling,
There's more than meets the eye.

Because when day is over
I drop on bended knee.
I lift my voice toward heaven
And pray most fervently:
"O Saint Peter, up above,
Those golden gates make wide,
So that paunchy Presbyterians
Can some day squeeze inside."

The Armed Services — MIRROR OF AMERICAN YOUTH

By Eli Ginzberg

DURING the past two decades, except for a period of eighteen months in the late 1940's, young men in the United States have had to undergo a period of compulsory military service. Since 1940 more than 20 million young men have served on active duty. This represents a significant segment of the total male population in the younger and middle age groups. Some time ago I calculated that the young men who served during World War II spent more time, on the average, in the Armed Services than in high school. A recent study by the Department of Defense revealed that approximately 70 per cent of all young men reaching twenty-six have had some military service.

Clearly the accumulation of detailed military personnel records is a valuable resource for the systematic study of the lives and performance of the nation's young men. An important word of caution must be said about the findings on American youth that are set forth below. These findings reflect conditions covering a relatively long span of years. Many of the men who served in World War II were educated in the 1920's (and some even earlier), whereas the youngsters coming of draft age today were born after the onset of World War II. We must take care, therefore, to interpret the findings carefully, so as to allow for the substantial and rapid changes taking place in the environment in which young people grow up. A single illustration will help to make this clear: Among the men who saw service during World War II were many who grew up in the more isolated areas of the southeastern portion of the United States where the automobile had not yet penetrated. (The automobile is used here to illustrate the general level of development.) Today such regions have all but disappeared.

Here, then, are some of the key findings about American youth that have come out of a study of men who have served in the Armed Forces during the past twenty years.

Educational Preparation

The United States has one of the oldest and most elaborate systems of public education of any nation in the world. Despite this fact, the experience of the Armed Services underscores the extent to which this system has failed to prepare young persons adequately. In World War II, over 700,000 young men were rejected for service because of illiteracy; about 500,000 illiterates were accepted, most of whom were given special literacy training after induction; and another 600,000 were so poorly educated that they were able to make only a small contribution to the Army. Thus, out of about 18 million men between the ages of 18 and 37 who were screened, about 1.8 million were found to be severely deficient educationally. Roughly one out of every ten young men was a total or borderline illiterate.

Although the results of the selection procedures have shown improvement in the literacy of young men over the last decade and a half, the current situation still leaves much to be desired. The Army, which has had to continue to use the draft to fill its requirements, was being inundated, several years ago, by such a large number of poorly educated young men that it had to seek special relief from Congress in the form of permission to raise its acceptance standards. Since military technology is constantly more complex, a young man who is unable because of faulty basic education to absorb specialist training can contribute little to the services. Even before induction standards were raised, the Armed Services found it necessary to reject, primarily because of educational deficiency, more than one out of every four young men from the Southeast States.

Subcultures

The particularly high rate of rejections from the Southeast—more than six times as great as the region with the lowest rate (North Central States)—underscores a point that is often overlooked: the United States still contains within its continental borders a series of distinct subcultures. As suggested earlier, the automobile and other forces of progress may be rapidly obliterating the distinctive characteristics of isolated and self-contained regions, but more time will have to elapse before the entire nation will appear to be cut from one piece of cloth.

I recall vividly a much-decorated sergeant to whom I gave a lift on my way from Washington to Fort Meade during the latter days of World War II. I asked him

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THIS ARTICLE was adapted from a lecture prepared for a series "Dilemmas of Contemporary Youth," at The Institute for Religious and Social Studies, Jan. 19, 1960, to be a chapter in the printed symposium, edited by R. M. MacIver, and published by the Institute.

what he had been doing since his return from the battlefront. He smiled and said that I might not believe him, but that all week he had been teaching boys from the Appalachians how to take showers and use soap!

During the Korean hostilities I visited an induction station in the Southeast where I personally interviewed a considerable number of young men, both white and Negro, who until the night before had never been away from home—who, in fact, had never seen a city of more than 10,000 inhabitants. That they were more than slightly overwhelmed by the operations of the induction station can be easily understood.

The remarkable point of these illustrations, however, is not that so many were unfit for military life, but that so many, with a little help and indulgence, could make the transition from their simple backgrounds to the complex technological Army.

Motivation to Serve

We entered World War II with an army of young men many of whom, if they had been concerned about military problems at all, had been taught that we had been dragged into World War I by the munitions makers, that Europe was none of our concern, and that war never settled anything. No nation was more poorly prepared ideologically to sacrifice treasure and life on the field of battle. Yet with the willingness and ability to learn and change, which are among our great strengths, these handicaps were quickly overcome, and the majority of Americans fought with distinction.

We have been told, largely by the Armed Services, that in contrast with the World War II record, that of the Korean conflict was very poor. A high proportion of the soldiers who were captured revealed major defects in the realm of character. Many persons have speculated on the causes of this, and the explanations have run the entire gamut from a loss of religious faith to "Mom-ism."

But the critics failed to note that, whatever the shortcomings of American youth revealed in the prisoner-of-war camps, the weaknesses revealed on the home front during the same period were much more serious. We went about our merry way, making goods and making money, while several hundred thousand young men, picked more or less at random, fought and died in Korea. The startling fact about Korea is not that a minority succumbed to the blandishments of the Chinese, but that much larger numbers did not, although receiving no support from home.

In more recent years, the motivation to serve in the Armed Services has become increasingly confused. A high proportion of the young men who are called for active duty have little understanding of the position of the United States in world affairs, nor do they grasp very clearly the role of the Armed Services in the nation's defense. Many of them feel that they are "suckers"—they had the bad luck to be caught up in the draft. They see others who are able to continue in their accustomed ways, who are the more "fortunate" ones—mainly students, who will probably be married by the time their deferments expire and some of whom might then be deferred because they will be fathers.

Once again, the fault lies less with the youth than with the nation. Despite two wars and a continuous cold war, Americans as a people have little interest or understanding of the political-military problems that confront the country. They are willing to vote funds for defense, but their involvement is not deep. Small wonder that many of their children do not view military service as an obligation.

Planning for the Future

Compulsory military service has been an established fact for the last twenty years. That should have led recent generations of young men to take account of the possibility of military service in their occupational and life plans. But, for reasons already suggested, as well as for others growing out of such factors as the widespread belief that jobs will always be available in an

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DR. ELI GINZBERG is Professor of Economics, as well as Director of the Conservation of Human Resources Project, at Columbia University, New York. He states:

"Social scientists are seldom able to study their subjects under laboratory conditions. Thus, the personnel records of World War II provide a unique research opportunity to study the performance of men under simulated laboratory conditions. This was recognized by General Eisenhower when, as president of Columbia University, he established the Conservation of Human Resources Project."

The Project's major findings are contained in *The Uneducated* (1953), *The Negro Potential* (1956), and *The Ineffective Soldier: Lessons for Management and the Nation* (1959), all published by Columbia University Press.

During the past decade Dr. Ginzberg has also served as Consultant for Manpower and Personnel to the Secretary of the Army. From that vantage point he has been able to learn much about the present generation of young men as reflected in their performance in the Army during and since the Korean hostilities. It must be emphasized, however, that Dr. Ginzberg's interpretation in the accompanying article does not necessarily reflect the official position of the Army.

Concerning his concluding observations, Dr. Ginzberg has commented that although military life does offer some advantages for young Americans, this fact should not lead us to suppose that military life should be maintained simply in order to hold on to them.

affluent society, relatively few young men make their plans so as to take advantage of the time that they will spend in the Armed Services. Many do profit from their experience, but few have actually planned to do so. Once again the nation, rather than the youth, is at fault. Few parents and school officials are fully aware of the tremendous role that the Armed Services play as educational and training institutions. Most parents and counselors, therefore, are poorly equipped to help young people dovetail their secondary and collegiate education with their options in the military in such a way that their years on active duty can add depth and strength to their development.

In passing, it can be noted that many men acquire training and experience during their military service that stands them in good stead on their return to civilian life. Tens of thousands who hold good jobs as technicians in civilian industry received their basic technical training while in uniform.

Maturation

Why do so many young people give so little thought to what they want to be when they grow up and to how their military service might be used to further their plans? One reason is the constant stretching out of adolescence, or what might be called a prolonged childhood. It was pointed out earlier that many young people have never been away from home for even a single night before entering the service. An increasing proportion of all young people remain in school at least until they are eighteen and many others until they are twenty-two. Throughout this long period, most of them live at home and, in a great many ways, are protected from direct exposure to the realities of a world that contains many types of people and problems.

Although these young people would, from the passage of time itself, mature even if they remained in their home communities, military service helps to catapult them into adulthood. In the service, they are forced to meet strict standards; they must assume and discharge specific responsibilities; they must learn to live in close relationship with a great variety of men whose ways of thinking and acting are strange to them.

During the course of their service, they will have the opportunity to travel from one part of the country to another; they will in all probability also have an opportunity to serve abroad. All these and other experiences will help to mature them. A few may not be able to cope with the strange and new, but the vast majority will.

Race Relations

It was my good fortune to be able to play a part in the final desegregation of the Army in the early 1950's, and I have remained more or less abreast of developments on this front since that time. I sincerely question whether most people have an awareness of the significance of this lesson in group relations. Young men who have grown up in the deep South and have experienced eighteen or more years of intense indoctrination as to the respective roles and relationships of white and Negro must, on the day of their entrance into the Armed Services, put aside all they have been taught and adapt themselves to a new pattern. They must do this during all the hours of the day and night that they are on the post—when they work, play, eat, sleep, and worship. But on their time off when they go into town, they are again exposed to the racial patterns with which they are familiar.

It is my belief, in fact my conviction, that the impact of the experience of living with full integration cannot possibly be lost on the very large numbers of men who have been exposed to it. Admittedly, different men react differently to it, but no man can be unaffected by it.

Some Concluding Observations

The Armed Services have provided a clear mirror of many of the strengths and weaknesses of American youth. They have helped us to see many of the more serious shortcomings in contemporary society as they impinge on the development and education of young people.

Moreover, the services themselves were found to be important among the institutions that shape the young manhood of the nation. Attention was called to the roles played by the services in vocational preparation, in broadening both occupational and geographical horizons, in altering deep-seated attitudes and behavior toward racial minorities.

The services make additional contributions: It has long been noted that men who are overweight at induction slim down as a result of military service and that those who are underweight usually gain weight. In point of fact, the Armed Services play an important role in health education. Many men learn about personal hygiene; others are exposed for the first time in their lives to a balanced diet, and all learn about the contribution physicians and dentists can make to their well-being. In these and still other ways, military service contributes to improving the health of the nation.

Up to this point the reflections in the mirror have been clear and sharp. Now, in conclusion, I would like to discuss a reflection that is much less clear, one in which only the outlines can be perceived—the details have to be filled in. I want to set forth the proposition that compulsory military service has contributed greatly to making millions of young Americans more aware of the values and virtues of freedom. It is not possible to be subjected to minute control for a period of between two and four years—twenty-four hours in the day, seven days in the week, fifty-two weeks in the year—without becoming aware of the advantages of a society in which the individual can do almost as he likes as long as he does not run into conflict with the law.

In the paradoxical manner of history, the Armed Services may be contributing significantly in two ways to the well-being of the nation: by maintaining the country's security and, at the same time, helping Americans appreciate more deeply the nature of freedom.

**There is always "the next election,"
and a responsible citizen's work is never done.**

**In the following three articles, LEONARD J. KRAMER,
head of the political science department,
Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana,
writes about the perennially important subject of—**

GETTING INTO THE POLITICAL SWIM

"By and large, you could ship all the lawyers, preachers, and doctors to Siberia, and it would not make one whit of difference to the political process." This is the answer I received from one community leader, himself a minister in a large Midwestern city. It was in reply to a questionnaire sent to find out, among other things, what groups and individuals were most effective on certain community issues. The same person went on: "The mayor runs our city—and nobody runs the mayor." Your response, and mine, to such a situation can only be, "But is this democracy?"

Tried and Found—Out

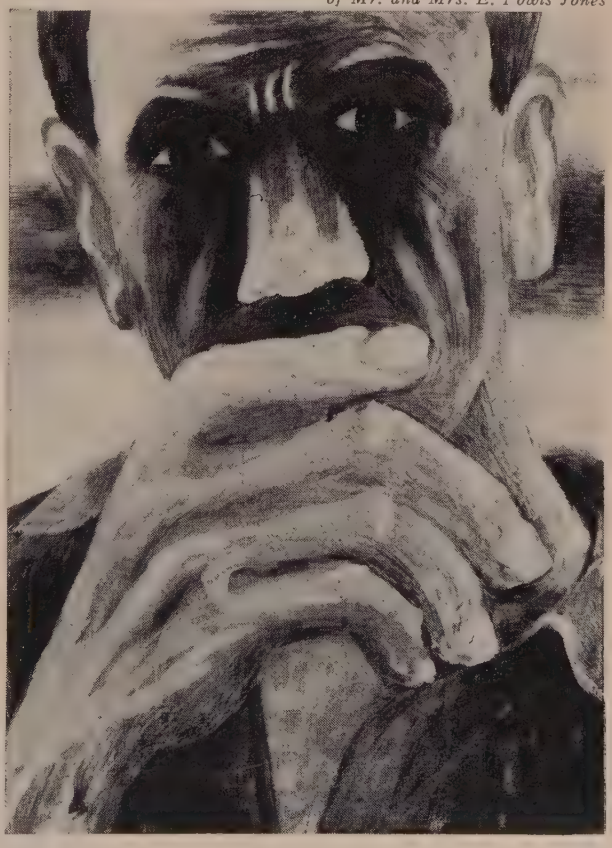
Whatever might be said of this conclusion, it is far from our cherished notion of the people being sovereign. Indeed, the discouragement about actual democracy, either its possibility or desirability, is more widespread than we might imagine. Oh, to be sure, we keep alive the myth that democracy, which is basically government by the people, is the best form of political affairs and that somehow this is what we have as our political system. But what facts do the detractors of democracy have to buttress their case? Here are a few of them through the window of our voting behavior. This surely is one index, but only one, of political interest or apathy.

On the whole, we Americans have a poorer voting record than the British, the French, the Italians, or the Russians. Our heaviest turnout of voters occurs at presidential elections. Nevertheless, in recent presidential elections, only about three fifths of those eligible actually showed up at the polls. In state and local elections the percentage is usually much lower. Generally the pattern of participation has the following features: Fewer women vote than men. The lower one's income and educational level, the more likely he is not to vote. Young people and the aged do not vote nearly so much as do middle-aged groups. Republicans appear to vote in larger proportion than Democrats. Where party competition is hottest, voting is heaviest. In some instances less than twenty-five in one hundred eligible voters exercise this basic responsibility and right of citizenship. From the many studies made of voting, it appears that there is a hard core of political know-and-do-nothings. I have often wondered how many church members are in this group.

Important as it is, voting is by no means the sole or even highest role for the citizen. Every responsible citizen ought to be discussing public questions, forming groups to exert pressure at points vital to the general welfare, expressing constructively favor or disapproval of public policies and leaders, taking part in political parties, and sometimes holding public office. In such matters, too many of us act as though we prefer to remain untainted. Perhaps our problem is one of basic

MAN, *by Ben Shahn*

Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. E. Powis Jones



attitudes. How do we regard politics and government? Is it a vital area of activity receiving the best talents in our town? Have we changed much, or enough, since the 1930's, when Robert and Helen Lynd laid bare the community behavior patterns in "Middletown" and concluded: "In a civilization in which the health of the

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community is gauged by its financial pulse, preoccupation with private rather than public business on the part of its ablest citizens is increasingly regarded by Middletown as not only a normal but a desirable state of affairs."

There is a negative view that holds that the less government we have, the better. Christians are prone to regard politics as dirty and rough, unseemly and uncouth. Some people even give the impression that the best condition for mankind would be no government at all. Manifestly, such an outcome is absurd and, indeed, has many similarities to the communist ideal society in which the state presumably has withered away.

The positive attitude, which for too many Americans is a minority viewpoint, regards politics and government as necessary and desirable. The contention is that politics is as inevitable as religion. If this is true, then it remains that we shall have either a high or low religion, a high or low politics. Through politics and government we do collectively the things we cannot or have not done successfully as individuals. In the realm of human rights, for example, government is an instrument by which we keep people from being bilked and bullied by predatory persons or groups. Or put it another way: Government is the means by which we the people arrange affairs in order to perfect our united efforts, establish justice, make certain there is internal peace and security in our foreign relations, thereby promoting the general welfare and assuring the blessings of liberty to ourselves and unto our children's children. This, as you may have guessed, is a paraphrase of the ideas in the preamble of our national Constitution. All these objectives, moreover, are accomplished only through the give-and-take, the promotion and commotion, the selection and election that is politics. Where government, and the political process of getting leaders and arriving at policies, is genuinely democratic, according to the *expressed* will of the people, it cannot help being *for* the people because it is so thoroughly controlled *by* them. Thus, in the final analysis, if one sees the role of government as a positive one, to curse government is to swear at oneself. We are going to get "better politics for better living" only when this more positive view of government percolates sufficiently through the consciousness of enough Americans to move them to constructive action.

To say that democracy is on trial is to mouth a cliché. In spite of the poor record we have as citizens I do not agree that we have been tried and found out We have not reached the stage at which the trial is over and we stand ready for the sentence and a prison term. The communists might think that the wave of the future is to be theirs, but they can be brought to revise their ideas about this prediction as they have their ideas about many others. There is hope, providing we change our basic attitude toward politics and government. From this new view will come new activity We need to give this area of our common life the vision intelligence, energy, devotion, and continuity we lavish on lesser pursuits. We need a hundred million politicians—roughly the number of eligible voters in the land.

Getting Into the Political Swim

Once a person has resolved to be a more responsible citizen, the question arises, "How?" The answer to that question depends upon what level of political activity the person intends to enter. Some people get all dressed in their swimming togs and then loll around the edge of the pool and chat. A few merely dabble their toes in the water. Others dash to the edge

of the diving board, as though going into a mighty jackknife or back flip, only to end up teetering up and down on the edge. These are the pure exhibitionists with not even a splash. Then again, one can fall in jump in, or just get pushed. According to a recent biography of Richard Nixon, it seems that he got pushed in at first, but ever since has been swimming strongly on his own. Eisenhower definitely was pushed, or pulled, in.

In any event, the important thing is to *get in*. Making up our minds to do it seems to be the most important first step. Hard as this may seem, it is still the easiest part. For politics and government, just as swimming, take learning, practice, skill, and patience. Politics can be fun, but it is hard work. It has both its own special exhilarations and disappointments, to which we shall turn our attention next.

Where the Political Grass Roots

When President Eisenhower gave his stag dinners at the White House, he enjoyed asking his guests, "Do you know what election precinct you live in?" Embarrassingly many had to admit, "No," or "I'm not sure." This gave the President the opportunity he wanted for a short lecture on how effectiveness in politics begins with the precinct. The President was never more correct. Old political campaigners will tell you: "If we win or lose, it will be in the precincts. Give us an organization strong in the precincts, and we'll show you a victorious team."

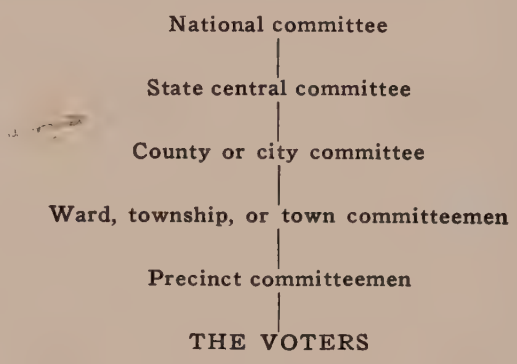
Practical politics flourishes or dies at the precinct level. Politics in the best and basic sense is close to people, in your town, on your block, in your home, where you live.

Since there are so many of us, there are over 150,000 precincts in the United States. A precinct is an election district. You vote in your precinct. The size of the average precinct is about four hundred voters. Geographically, this may be no more than a city block in a crowded urban area, or it may be many square miles in a rural district. If you want to get into political action, the precinct is the place to start. This is where the grass takes root. But before we get going, we ought to have a glimpse of how the precinct fits into the larger political framework.

The Anatomy of a Party

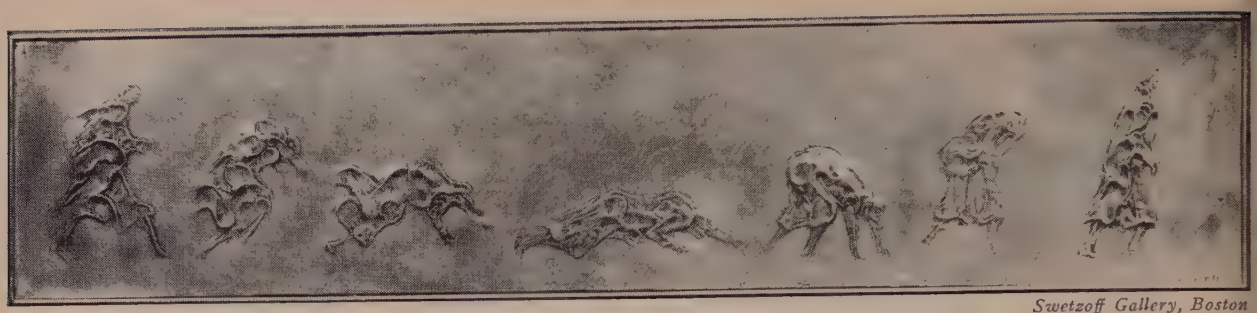
The way in which political parties are organized and function varies widely in the fifty states of our Union. Political parties have grown up without benefit of the Constitution, but in response to people's needs. Except for broad ground rules, the Federal Government keeps its hands out of political party matters. Thus our national parties are loosely held together combinations of state-controlled units. Among the states there is no uniform pattern. Nevertheless, there are generally followed practices as to party organization, policy-making, nominating candidates, and electing party officials. It will be necessary for you to discover on your own to what degree your particular state adheres to the following arrangements.

The parties tend to be better organized and more active where they are in competition for the prizes of office. Usually a precinct committeeman, sometimes called a captain, heads the party in the precinct. He is the party's representative, getting his job either by appointment or by election. His relation to the other levels of the organization is illustrated thus:



The structure, however, is not nearly so rigid as the above indicates. Politics is fluid, dynamic. It is made up of human beings and their relationships. There is interaction within and between all levels. Strong personalities or coalitions of interests may dominate the entire structure or parts of it.

The precinct committeeman, as the connecting link between the voters and the party, is expected to "sell" the party's program and candidates; he is to "deliver" the vote. To carry out these functions, he and his assistants perform many chores: registering voters, canvassing the community for political candidates, getting people to the polls, and recruiting election officials. Right at this point is where *you* come in. Although the next election may be many months away, get in touch with your precinct committeeman. Offer to work. Let no task be too humble. Stamp envelopes, drive your car, make phone calls. All of this, of course, is without compensation. If the committeeman is lukewarm, be persistent. Usually he needs more help than he can get, but he may be suspicious of your motives, probably thinks you are a "do-gooder," an "amateur." In this he may not be far wrong. Impress upon him that your interest in party work is not restricted merely to election time. Arrange to manage your block or neighborhood for him. A good precinct committeeman cultivates his vineyard all the time, performing numerous services by personalizing government. Help him. This is the way you learn. Here is how you get on the inside. On



Swetzoff Gallery, Boston

WALKING MAN, ***cast bronze relief by Harold Tovish***

this level, or higher, you may be able to do some of the directing, given time and experience.

Perhaps you are repelled by such suggestions. You reply, "Who wants to be a political hack, a lackey for some fourth-rate politician, a lighter for a cigar chomper?" Do you mean by this that you are too good for menial jobs? Where should a beginner begin but at the beginning? Politics, as are all our endeavors, is organized. Either you enter the organization as it is, if you can, and better it from the inside, or you set up your own organization.

The starting of a political group among like-minded neighbors might be the best thing that could happen in your precinct. Maybe the old order is dead and doesn't know it—and certainly will not admit it. Many of today's leaders started as challengers of established and fossilized groups. "I would be a terrible hypocrite to resent the right of any element to challenge my district leadership," said Carmine DeSapio, the head of

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Tammany Hall, "especially since I myself was elected to that position as an insurgent." But the road of insurgent individuals and groups is a hard one. For some wise suggestions by a practitioner in establishing such neighborhood political clubs, consult *Elm Street Politics,* by Stephen A. Mitchell (Oceana Publications, Inc., 1959; $2.75). Mitchell is a former national chairman of the Democratic Party. The book also carries a foreword by Leonard W. Hall, former national chairman of the Republican Party.

Politics Is Your Business

Wherever you start and wherever you go as a budding politician, there are some rules of the game that every player ought to know. Such precepts are not substitutes for your own direct experience—nothing can replace that, but they may be guidelines. They are neither new ten commandments nor a political gospel, but they can be helpful.

1. Politics is human relations. Indeed, politics may be one of the highest forms of behavior, contrary to most of the clichés current about politicians.

2. Politics can be rough. Tumble is mixed in, too. You have to be able to take it. If you're squeamish, sensitive, and spiritually fragile, better stay out of the game. However, if struggle, conflict, and sacrifice whet your appetites, you can survive, maybe even get something done.

3. Politics demands time and money. In case you don't have overmuch of one, the other will do. What you don't have of one, you can enlist from others.

4. Politics needs informed people. Our government is complex, often impersonal. You can clarify issues, get and support the best candidates, if you know people and their problems. A prime mistake is, as someone has said, to "overestimate the people's knowledge or underestimate their intelligence."

5. Politics requires an unusual amalgam of intelligence, patience, courtesy, integrity, gregariousness, humor, and plain hard work. This sounds like a catechism for sainthood. It works well in politics too. We all have some of these qualities, lack others. We all can acquire more of them. Politicians are as good as a cross section of the public that puts them in office. Sometimes they're better. Democracy is a way, it has been said wryly, to make sure that people are governed no better than they deserve.

6. Politics operates in the realm of the known. You will be known if you belong to many kinds of groups and clubs. A leader is one willing to serve in many capacities, one who literally gives himself.

7. Politics is a power relationship. It is the process of who gets what, when, why, and how. Call it a science, if you wish, but practice it as an art. As such, it is not restricted to election campaigns. It operates every day of the year and in every form of human grouping.

8. Politics uses all the media of communication—radio, TV, newspapers, telephone, conversation. It reaches people to learn from them and to inform them.

9. Politics is the art of the possible, an old saying. No ideals worth their name are lost by working out a compromise that may be, under the circumstances, the best possible solution at the time.

10. Politics concerns local questions—better schools, roads, snow removal, garbage collection, libraries; national issues—old-age medical assistance, the debt, taxes, the Presidency; international problems—disarmament, foreign aid, communism, trade.

Politics is your business. Make it so.

Cooking by Pressure —POLITICALLY

WHERE two or three Americans are gathered together, there is at least one chairman in their midst. We are a nation of joiners. For this we ed not be apologetic. Our democracy is dynamic. row out the methods by which people come together foster their common interests and you get rule by meone other than the people.

Interest groups, frequently called pressure groups, routed up in our culture as a natural by-product of r democratic system. All of us belong to many interest groups. Not all of these, of course, are active in e arena of public issues.

Our basic group membership is in the family. Then ain, we belong to the First United Presbyterian urch, the Kappa Kappa Kappa sorority, the country ub, the Elks, the Rotary, a philatelic society, a wling league. Other groups include the Republican or emocratic Party, the National Association of Manucturers or the AFL-CIO, the League of Women ters, a local taxpayers association, the NAACP, the merican Farm Bureau Federation, the National Edution Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, e American Legion.

All these groups may enter the field of public polics when their interests are involved, but the groups the second list are immersed in political matters. This is legitimate. There is nothing morally wrong in such activity. Indeed, participation of this kind may result in great public usefulness. It is a way of making your will felt by political candidates and parties. It is a method of influencing those in office to create the policies you favor or to enforce laws already on the books. Public opinion is shaped for or against certain measures through pressure groups.

Democracy's Kitchen

The place of pressure groups in our political life is greatly misunderstood when it is recognized at all. Lobbyists, who are the agents for pressure groups active on the political scene, too often are held in low esteem by the general public. Their place on the status totem pole is even lower than that of the politicians. All of this is most unfortunate, for it distorts what is and will remain an integral part of our system.

Most legislators, whether in state capitols or in Congress, do not share the public's disdain of lobbies. They regard lobbyists as "the Third House." Several years ago, a nongovernmental publication made a survey of all the senators and representatives in Congress. Most of those questioned testified that lobbyists are helpful in the legislative process.

Pressure groups are not, however, above reproach.

Sidney Janis Gallery, New York

he place of lobbyists on the status otem pole is even lower than that of the politicians.

NUMBER 27, 1951
By Jackson Pollock

What human enterprise is? Even churches are not ethically pure. Pressure groups may go too far in several ways. For instance:

1. They can use corrupt methods—bribery, high-pressure tactics, demagogic appeals. They are prone to practice the advice once given to farmers to "raise less corn and more hell" to get price supports.

2. The lobbyist is responsible mainly to his special group. This can lead to a myopia whereby he confuses what is good for General Optics with what is good for the country. His theme song is likely to be "My Country, 'Tis of Me."

3. Some see pressure groups as competitors of political parties. It is claimed that lobbyists drive wedges into the loyalty that legislators should reserve for their party.

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4. Pressure groups, it is said, give too much power to those with the most money to hire the best lobbyists.

5. Pressure groups are undemocratic. A well-oiled group gets its program from the officers of the organization and not from the membership.

These criticisms, or parts of them, are true of some pressure groups. Generally, however, most groups are as good as the people who make them up. There are laws to control them, but these are not too effective. Public knowledge is the best regulator. It is also felt by many students of the subject that a large number of pressure groups tend to cancel out one another in influence. For example, unions can counterbalance employers' propaganda, and vice versa. A point is that pressure groups in politics bring forth data and dramatize causes that otherwise would go unnoticed and unremedied. For instance, underprivileged minorities with racial, religious, or nationality grievances can be heard. The Indian Americans, the Negroes, the Japanese-Americans, the Mexican migrant workers, and the pacifists have faced difficult predicaments that might well have continued without any fair consideration at all except for special-interest groups devoted to their welfare.

To deny pressure groups either their existence or rights would be to deny the Constitution, even though it does not mention such groups specifically. "It is beyond debate," states Justice John Harlan, writing for a unanimous Supreme Court in a certain case, "that freedom to engage in association for the achievement of beliefs and ideas is an inseparable aspect of the 'liberty' assured by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment." He goes on to add that "it is immaterial whether such beliefs sought to be advanced by association pertain to political, economic, religious, or cultural matters." We need to use pressure groups intelligently, for the public good as well as our own interests, and to encourage their exercise of moral sound methods.

Cooking Political Vegetables

All of this may sound far distant from your immed ate livelihood or Christian commitment. Actually, t opposite is true. You belong already to many lobbyi groups. What part do you take either in formulati the policies of these groups or in establishing their pra tices? In a real sense, you are responsible for the grou to which you belong. To be active in their politic program you must learn and do many things. Do y know about their legislative proposals? Are you f them? Then, sponsor them. Write your legislat Better yet, go to see him. Visit committee hearing attend the legislative sessions. Adopt a bill as "yo bill" and follow it through the mill. Support repr sentatives who support what you believe in. Upho them during their campaigns, in the primaries, a at general elections, and while they are in office. G to know the administrators of our laws.

Perhaps you want to belong to a pressure group d rectly involved in lifting the political level in yo community, state, and nation. There are such. For t women, the League of Women Voters is an effectiv nonpartisan organ. Or you could originate a group your own to carry out a needy community project- better playgrounds, wiser zoning restrictions, high salaries for policemen, a public-health program. Pa ents can band together to bring pressure on the scho board to raise educational standards.

In one town, several parents wanted French a Spanish introduced into the lower grades. They cou not budge the school board, which pleaded "no funds The parents went ahead on their own. They took contributions, hired expert language teachers, and h the students going to out-of-school courses. The resul were amazing, both in the students and in the co munity. The school board, after several years and so changes in personnel, became "convinced." Result: new dimension in that public school's education program was inaugurated—by a pressure group.

A parent I know was perturbed about the "ti question" for school children. The public scho stayed on "old time," while the community was "daylight time." This parent went about mobilizing f a change. He talked with many other parents. At wo and in the evenings, he talked. He visited people he h never met before. He happened to be a Presbyteri businessman; but he contacted all parents. It made difference whether they were Catholics, Maso women, or plumbers. After all, they were parents; th was enough. Meetings were called. Sentiment began warm on the subject. The heat built up. The politic vegetables were cooking—under pressure. This is h it happens.

Call it what you will, it's politics—practical, pote purposive. It is one way we Americans accompli what we think is worth doing.

NOTES *for Program Planning*

Your planning committee should do four things: (1) study the three program articles in this issue of Crossroads, seeking to list the questions that are especially applicable to the local situation; (2) study some of the additional resources; (3) plan to have politicians at your meetings; (4) publicize the meetings in a way that will indicate their relevance.

Questions to Consider

On which aspects of local politics do your members need to have information? to share opinions? to debate? to discuss?

The first program article may stimulate questions like these:

1. What are the significant political issues in your community? How are these issues presented to the people? What opportunities do the citizens have for evaluating them? What individuals and groups have the most effective influence in the policy decisions that affect these issues?

2. Why do people vote and what factors in your area seem to encourage their indifference?

3. To what extent is politics receiving the best talents in your political subdivision? Do the people of your community need to change their basic attitude toward politics and government? Why don't they change it?

In the second program article:

1. What are the boundaries of the precincts in which your members live?

2. How do the political parties function in these precincts? Who are the active leaders? What do they do? To whom are they responsible?

3. When might it be useful to help start or support an insurgent precinct group?

In the third program article:

1. What "interest groups" claim the time and efforts of your members?

2. How often and for what purposes have these interest groups become political pressure groups?

3. In your community, what public issues are not being adequately studied or dealt with? How might a person seek to create a pressure group to correct the situation? What activities would such a group have to undertake?

Additional Resources

"Is Politics a Nasty Business?" by Robert C. Holtzapple, Jr., in the April–June, 1960, issue of Crossroads, with the leader's resources for this *Christian Round Table* unit in the companion issue of *Westminster Adult Leader.*

"Atomic Ships and Jelly Men," and "Personal Piety and Power Politics" (Unit III of the *Christian Faith and Life* articles), both by H. Ben Sissel, in the July–Sept., 1960, issue of Crossroads and, for the latter, the leader's material in *Westminster Adult Leader.*

"What Makes Politics Politics," by H. B. Sissel, "Politics and the Bureaus: Checks and Balances in Action," by Julius N. Cahn, "The Christian in Organization Politics," by Gayraud S. Wilmore, Jr., and "How to Get Into Local Politics," all in the June, 1960, issue of *Social Progress,* which is published monthly by the Office of Church and Society of the Board of Christian Education of The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

The Protestant and Politics, by William Lee Miller (Layman's Theological Library, The Westminster Press; $1.00).

Parties and Politics in America, by Clinton Rossiter (Cornell University Press; $2.85, paper, $1.65).

Planning the Presentations

One church group, utilizing earlier Crossroads material on this subject, presented several sessions led by members of the congregation who were lawyers. One was a local judge, another the chairman of the county board of supervisors, and another a city councilman. These leaders represented the two major political parties and the nonpartisan, independent segment of the voting population. The results were "very lively." Mere conversation about local politics among a group of politically inactive people is less than edifying. If possible, group members should themselves become as familiar as they can with the local political situation, but, also, they would do well to invite those with practical, up-to-date experience in the field to participate in the sessions as speakers, discussion leaders, or resource persons.

THEME FOR THE YEAR : *Jesus Christ Is Lord*

Unit II—Was Jesus a Teacher?

Three Articles Completing the Study Begun Last Quarter

By William H. Chalker

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11

NEW LIFE IN THE NEW COMMUNITY

For a great many people, Christianity is the development of individual piety or personal virtue in order to make one fit for heaven. To these people, the church, the Christian community, is simply an institution that aids in the development of this personal piety. But the Bible presents a different picture. In it, the community glorifies God, and man is saved by being made a member of the community. Therefore, there is no salvation apart from the community of God's people.

Read *Matt. 25: 31-46.*

PERHAPS the most damnable legacy left to the church from the preceding centuries is the idea that salvation is primarily an individual affair rather than primarily a community affair. This legacy lingers on in many forms. It is still a very popular idea that the Christian life is primarily one of personal purity—of keeping one's self unspotted by the sins of the world. Few church members—or ministers, for that matter—seem to have any idea why the church as a community worships God; private or personal devotions seem to be just as satisfying. *Social Progress,* the Social Education and Action publication of our denomination, is constantly under attack by church members—and ministers—who think it is the business of the church to save individual souls and not to become involved in social issues. It is often lamented: "Why don't these young ministers ever talk about personal atonement, like the ministers in the good old days? All they seem to care about today is the latest social or political issue." It has become a very popular practice to insert in the church bulletin a statement such as this: "If you must talk in church, talk with God," as if the presence of God shuts us off from one another! Young people are told in their conferences to take Christ as their personal Savior, without any explanation that he is the Savior of the world. I recently attended a celebration of the Lord's Supper, after which the communicants were told to leave in silence and to go home without talking with one another. I would guess that there is more real community at a party!

In this respect we need a new reformation today that will return to the Bible rather than to the traditions of preceding centuries to recover the community dimension of the Christian faith. Such a reformation will no doubt be resisted by good religious people today, just as the Protestant Reformation was resisted by good religious people. The religion of Grandmother and Grandfather is always more attractive and comfortable than the strange, shocking religion of the Son of God who was crucified and raised from the dead.

Community in the Bible

God created the world and all that is in it to declare his glory and to show his handiwork. The world is *good* in so far as it fulfills this purpose. Humanity is a part of this created world and so it, too, is good in so

ar as it glorifies God the Creator. But man, of all the reated things, was unique. He was made in the image f God. Therefore, man was to glorify God in a unique ray. By virtue of being in God's image, man was to now God and to obey his will. God's will for man was hat all men should live in community, each being the eeper of the other, each showing the other the same ove that God had shown them all. Thus, God, looking own upon mankind from his heavenly abode, would ee in their obedient community a reflection of his will; God would see his image. This community was to e something like a choir. It was the total community hat was to praise and glorify God—not individual nembers of it. Just as in a well-trained choir no indiidual can do his job by withdrawing from the group nd singing alone, so in God's created community of nen no individual could glorify God by himself. There vas no place for prima donnas in the Garden of Eden.

Trouble in the Garden

But the members of the community wanted to be rima donnas anyway. They rejected God's will for hem (that they should be a harmonious community), nd in so doing rejected one another ("Am I my rother's keeper?"). So the community of God's people vas broken up. Adam and Eve were driven from the arden, and all men were separated by language barriers (*Gen. 11: 1-9*).

God to the Rescue

In spite of man's rejection of God's purpose for im, God did not reject man. On the contrary, God oved his fallen creatures; he decided that he would estore them to his rule or, to say the same thing, he lecided to forgive them, to save them, to redeem them. Well, what does it mean for men to be saved by God? It simply means to be made into a *community* again. If God created man to glorify him in a community, here is no other way for man to fulfill his God-given lestiny than to be in community with his fellow men.

What specifically did God do? He created a community of people for himself. He called the Israelite slaves to be the first major step in the reconstruction. He gave them a covenant, which explained to them what it meant to be a human creature of God. Then he sent his own Son to be the anointed King of that community, so that through him it could embrace all peoples and all nations, not just Israel. The church in the New Testament is nothing but the continuation and expansion of Israel in the Old Testament. And the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven, is nothing but the promised perfecting of the community that was begun in Israel and continued in the church. The goal of God's redeeming work is the restoration of the community that was intended for man in the first place.

No Religious Hermits

It is interesting and informative to notice that, in the Biblical account of God's work, there are no religious hermits, no paragons of individual piety and purity. When God saves—restores—a man, he does not make him personally pious; he sends him back into the life of the community and makes him a responsible man there. On several occasions in the Bible, certain men tried to become individually religious, but they didn't get very far with it. When God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses made five excuses to stay in his wonderful, pious solitude, but God would not let him remain. He said to Moses, "Get down yonder in Egypt and lead my children out!" Elijah went into the wilderness to mope and to celebrate his personal piety, but God said to him: "What are you doing here? Get back up in Israel where you belong."

God doesn't call men to be individually pure, aloof from the social and political controversies of the day. Moses, the prophets, Jesus, Paul—all became controversial figures in their day precisely because they obeyed the call of God. It is in the community life that the issue of God's glory is to be resolved, and so it is in the community that God's people are found.

Teachings of Jesus

The teachings of Jesus about the Kingdom of God stress over and over again the community dimension of man. In the Sermon on the Mount, much of the explicit instruction concerns man's relationships with his fellow man. But perhaps the most explicit teaching of Jesus in this connection is in *Matt. 25: 31-46,* the account of the Final Judgment. According to this account, the ones fit for the Kingdom were those who made no pretense of individual piety—"Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink?" (*v. 37*). They were content to be what God had made them to be: servants of their fellow man, who fed the poor, clothed the naked, and visited the prisoners. On the other hand, the ones unfit for the Kingdom, the goats, were those who had never once slipped up in their individual piety—"Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?" (*v. 44*). But as they were being individually pious before God, they had refused the one thing that God had created them for: service to the least of their brethren. All their piety, then, was a cover up for their rebellion against God. Because the Kingdom of God is the perfect rule of God, under which all men glorify God by living in the harmonious community of God, there is no room in the Kingdom for those who turn their backs on that community.

In college classes there are always some students who will do anything for the instructor but the work he assigns. They will write outside papers (or at least offer to), they will wash the instructor's car, they will mow his lawn, in fact, they will do anything but what they are supposed to do. Well, we are the same way before God. We will do all sorts of things for him: We will fast, we will read the Bible, we will pray at ap-

ELIJAH'S VISION
By Marc Chagall

Elijah went into the wilderness to mope and to celebrate his personal piety, but God said to him: "What are you doing down here? Get back up in Israel where you belong."

Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Reis.

pointed times, we will meditate day and night, we will keep ourselves pure from the sins of the world—but we won't do the one thing he requires of us. We will not acknowledge that God created us for just one thing: to glorify him by genuinely loving the brethren. It is so much easier to be individually religious than to be a human being!

In one sense, then, our sin is simply our desire to be something other than what God created us to be. Consequently, when, through the atonement in Jesus Christ, God forgives our sin, he simply gives us anew the possibility of being his obedient creatures. When God saves us through the blood of Christ, he is doing nothing other than restoring us to his community. The atonement, therefore, is not simply a private, personal transaction between an individual and God. It is a three-party affair, involving God, man, and neighbor.

Therefore, the church is not some institution that is incidental to salvation or that simply helps us to attain it. It is the very context in which our salvation is achieved. It is the new community *into which* we are saved.

When the church is understood as the restored community of God's people, it is possible then to understand why the church does some of the things it does. When it gathers to worship God, it does so in order to witness to what God has done—to witness to the fact that in Jesus Christ God has indeed made us a new

eople. In corporate worship it is the community that ffers praises to God, a community in which there are o prima donnas; it is in this worship by the com- nunity that God sees his image reflected and so is lorified. And this corporate worship is a witness to the ope that the restoration which has been begun among s will be made perfect by God's grace, that the com- nunity now feebly established may be ultimately com- leted.

Because the members of the church are reconciled o God, they are reconciled to one another. Conse- uently, the church is a fellowship in which each man s his brother's keeper. Remember the account in The cts of the collections Paul supervised for the help of he distressed brethren. The fellowship does not exist ust in local congregations; it is world-wide. Any at- empt to localize the fellowship, any attempt to keep harity at home at the expense of the world-wide fel- owship, is a denial of the fact that God has really re- tored us in Jesus Christ.

One word of warning is needed here: The church is ot an exclusive fellowship of the restored, whose nembers are to take pride in their restoration by turn- ng their backs on the world. Though it sounds para- doxical, the church truly remains unspotted from the world only if it turns its face to the world in love and service. The church is really the restored community, then, only as it engages in its mission in the world, only as it proclaims the gospel of restoration to all men, and only as it believes what it proclaims.

How far we have strayed from our understanding of the church as a community with a mission is seen in the very prevalent idea that the church is a *charity* that the world is expected to support! Businesses are often hounded to make donations to the church. When church buildings are being planned, the nonchurch members of the community are often asked to con- tribute. The church, created by God to serve the world, has lost its sense of mission and now expects the world to support it!

Israel, God's first restored community, often forgot that it existed not for privilege but for service, that it was a nation of priests, a light to the Gentiles. The church must remember anew that it also exists for a mission: to witness to the world through word and action that God is at work to restore his fallen creation and to make us new beings who love our Creator and live together in his Kingdom to his glory.

NIT II

12

THE INCARNATE WORD AND THE PREACHING MINISTRY

Read *Rom. 10: 5-17.*

THIS series of articles, according to the title, is on the subject of Jesus' role as teacher. This is the welfth article in the series, and some readers may be hinking that thus far very little has been said about Jesus the teacher. This has been the case because Jesus s not a teacher in the ordinary sense of the word.

Ordinary teaching is possible because of the pupil's apacity to learn. For example, Socrates, that great eacher, considered himself to be a gadfly, one who, hrough relentless questioning and probing of the pupil, rought out the truth that was latent in him all the ime. Socrates did not pretend to transmit or to impart nformation. He thought that the truth was in every nan and that the teaching task was to draw it out— o educate. But Jesus was certainly no teacher in the Socratic sense. He claimed to be the truth himself, the ruth that the world rejected.

In modern educational discussions we hear much bout motivation and readiness to learn. Here again, eaching is considered to be possible because of a apacity within the pupil. If his mental age is equal to t, he can grasp the subject matter presented, provided he is properly motivated—provided the subject matter will fulfill some need that he feels he has. But again, Jesus was not a teacher in the sense that these concepts of readiness and motivation imply. The truth Jesus taught was one that it was impossible for sinful man to grasp and one that certainly did not fulfill man's felt needs.

If we confuse Jesus with a teacher in the human sense of the word, we shall inevitably distort the gospel into something that it is not; we shall inevitably rob it of its offense.

In what sense, then, is Jesus a teacher? In the sense that he is the Word of God concerning God's human creatures. Jesus is the incarnation—embodiment—of God's will for us, the will of God that endures forever and cannot be foiled or frustrated. Just as God's word or will creates out of nothing—*ex nihilo*—and makes what it commands, so Jesus, as the Word of God, creates in us—*ex nihilo*—what is commanded. When Jesus teaches us who we are, then he creates us anew to be what God's will says that we are. His teaching does not depend upon any truth latent in us; it does not depend on any readiness in us to learn it; it does not depend on any proper motivation in us. Just as the nothingness out of which God created the world con- tributed nothing to the Creation, so we contribute nothing to the new creation of ourselves. Jesus, the cre- ative Word of God, calls us into our new being.

The Work of the Spirit

The God of the Bible is not just the Father and the Son; he is also the Spirit. The creative work of God is accomplished through the Word and the Spirit together. The Spirit, in a sense, brings into being what the Word prescribes. In this sense, Jesus the Word is truly seen and heard only when God's Spirit is present in the person who sees and hears. Jesus alone was not able to make men believe in him. They despised him and had him crucified. But when the Spirit was given to them, then they realized that they had killed the Lord of life; then their eyes were opened to see him as the incarnation of God's will; then their ears were opened to hear his words as the Word of life. The point to be noted is that the Word, apart from the Spirit, is despised and not recognized as the Word of God. But when God sends his Spirit to witness to the Word, then the Word creates a new man, in the place of the old man, to hear the Word.

The Incarnate Word and the Preached Word

In the light of what has been said thus far, we want to try to come to an understanding of what the preacher of the church is doing when he preaches the Word of God.

It is quite obvious that the Incarnate Word is not with us in the way that he was with the disciples in Palestine in the years around A.D. 30. But if God saves men—creates them anew—through his Word and his Spirit, how does his saving work continue, now that the Incarnate Word is no longer with us? Well, God's Word is still with us in at least two ways: in the Scripture and in the sermon. The Scripture is not a different Word of God from Jesus; it is rather a witness to, a testimony to, Jesus the Incarnate Word. The Old Testament is the witness of those who expected him, and the New Testament is the witness of those who knew him in the flesh. (We have noted in an earlier article that Jesus cannot really be known without the Old Testament, for in it is the expectation he claimed to fulfill.) So when men read the Bible, the written Word that witnesses to the Incarnate Word, and when the Spirit is present, they come to see and know Jesus as the Christ; they are born anew by the Word and Spirit. They become, in a sense, contemporaries of Christ just as the disciples were.

Detail from
CHRIST HEALING THE SICK
By Rembrandt

The second way in which the Word is still with us is in the sermon, the preached Word. This also is not a different Word of God from Jesus. If the Scripture is a written witness to Jesus, then the sermon is a spoken witness to him, the witness by the church in every age. The church is called in the Bible "the body of Christ" (*I Cor. 12: 27*). As such, it does the work of Christ in the world. Its members are endowed by the Spirit with gifts to perform that work. (See *I Cor. 12: 1-13*, for example.) One of the gifts is that of preaching (*Rom. 10: 14-17*). The men who have this gift are called by God to make Christ live through the spoken word. It is the task of the preacher to use every resource at his command to paint an accurate word picture of Jesus, so that the man in the pew will know, when the sermon is over, that he has been confronted by him. The preacher's main source is, of course, the Scripture, the written Word. But he can also draw from church history, which is the witness of previous generations to Jesus Christ, and from the testimony of his contemporaries. The preacher may, and should, use also contemporary social, economic, and political issues to which the Christian gospel is relevant, for in expounding the relevance of the gospel to these issues, he makes Jesus live today, rather than appear as simply some hero of the past. Remember that Jesus spoke to the situations of his day; therefore, the preacher must make him speak the same Word of God to the issues of our day.

The preacher's task, then, is not to entertain, to give his own opinions about various topics of interest, or to promote his pet projects from the pulpit. It is simply, but also profoundly, to witness to Jesus, the Incarnate Word.

We noticed in the first part of this article that Jesus himself, as a teacher, did not depend upon some innate truth latent in man or upon man's readiness or motivation. Likewise the preacher, in declaring Jesus Christ, is not to rely on any of these things. He is simply to witness to Jesus Christ.

What Happens When the Word Is Preached?

If the preacher does not rely on anything in man, ow can he expect any results? The only results the reacher has any right to expect are the results Jesus mself received. Without the witness of the Spirit, en despised Jesus and crucified him. The minister nnot expect anything better. If Jesus could not make en believe, neither can the preacher. In fact, if the reacher really makes Jesus "live" in the sermon, then e has every right to expect men to be upset, disturbed, ienated, just as they were 1,900 years ago when they w and heard Jesus in the flesh. But 1,900 years ago, hen God gave his Spirit to men, then they were able see and hear and believe Jesus the Word. So today, e preacher can preach the Word in the hope that God ill again send his Spirit, so that through the feeble reached words men will come to know Jesus. And is is, in fact, the way that God has prospered the urch down through the centuries. Through the reached Word and the Spirit men have been created ew by God. Through the feeble words of the preacher od has spoken his creative Word. When this happens —and it does happen—the preacher, of course, can ke no credit. He hasn't *converted* anyone. He has nly been a servant, and an unprofitable one at that. e deserves no credit. He was only doing what he as supposed to do. It was God who used the words of e preacher to accomplish his redemptive work.

A Plea for the Preaching Ministry

Let us end this article with a plea for the preaching inistry of the church. This is a special office, ap-ointed by God for the growth of the church. The reacher is no greater than other Christians, and he is not a privileged character; but his task is an important one and is not to be neglected. The preacher, therefore, must be given every possible opportunity to do his job well, and it must be recognized that his job is *preaching*. He is not primarily an administrator or a good mixer or a counselor or a youth director or a thousand other things. All these others are, to be sure, important, but it is not the preacher's main job to be these things. In a business we would be shocked if an executive spent most of his time typing his own letters, or if a typist spent most of her time filing, or if a salesman spent most of his time filling out red-tape forms, or if a janitor spent most of his time answering the telephone. In a well-run business, each person is given freedom to do *his own* job. In this respect, the church should be a well-run business. (Paul thought so, too, but used a different figure of speech.) We all need to come to the realization that the Sunday sermons (and any others) are not just incidentals in the church's life, but are its most important business. In the sermon the church is engaging in its proper task of mission in the world, for through it Jesus the Word is proclaimed and heard, and the church is prospered. If we do realize that this is the proper and most important work of the preacher, then we shall be concerned to see that the preacher has the freedom to do it and that he is not tied down by other jobs. And, likewise, we shall let him know that we expect from him good, responsible preaching and not just a few thoughts that he was able to scrape together on Saturday night. This is not a plea to give the preacher more leisure time. It is a plea to demand that he use his time on his proper business, declaring the good news to the world that God in Jesus Christ has restored us to himself.

NIT II

13

THE INCARNATE WORD AND THE TEACHING MINISTRY

Read *Acts 4: 1-20.*

MANY of those who read and study CROSSROADS are now or will be teachers in the church school. Since the church school is an important part of the eaching ministry of the church, it may be worth-while o devote the final article in this series to a discussion of what it means to teach the Word, which is Jesus Christ. Such a discussion is made all the more timely by the act that Christian education or religious training in ublic schools is an issue getting more and more atten-ion from both proponents and opponents. If we are to ct responsibly in the teaching ministry of the church, t is important that we understand just what this inistry is, and equally important, what it is not.

The nature of the teaching ministry is determined by the teaching role of Jesus. We have already seen in previous articles that when Jesus was on earth as a teacher, he did not consider it his role to teach men "things to do" or to teach them "a new way of life." Such things as these can be taught by ordinary educational means. But Jesus came to redeem us—to make us human again, and his teachings accomplish this only when to them is added the witness of the Spirit. Without the Spirit's witness, the teachings of Jesus degenerate into a new legalism; without this witness they constitute a list of things that one must do in order to be saved, in order to get his reward. Without the Spirit, Jesus' teachings are a curse. They make us into new Pharisees, who now follow "the teachings of Jesus"

rather than the law of Moses. Recall the last words of the Sermon on the Mount:

"Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." (*Matt. 7: 24-27.*)

When Jesus' words are heard without the witness of the Spirit, they are not truly heeded, and disaster follows. Therefore, if we conceive of Christian education as an ordinary educational process, that is, if we conceive of it as teaching people to "follow the teachings of Jesus" or to "adopt a Christian way of life," we are guilty of continuing the curse. Nothing is more saddening than to hear Sunday church school teachers saying to their pupils, "If you want to go to heaven, you had better follow the teachings of Jesus." The creative word of Jesus is turned into a law that kills.

This last point may be clarified by comparing Jesus' teachings to the Ten Commandments, the law of God. Now, as we have seen already, the law can be either a blessing or a curse. It is a blessing when, through the testimony of the Spirit, it is known as the creative word of God that brings into being a nation of people who are obedient. In this sense, the law is the gift of God's grace, for it creates what it demands. On the other hand, the law is a curse when, apart from the Spirit, it is thought of as a legalistic demand that a person must fulfill if he hopes to be saved or to get a reward. In this sense, the law kills, for it has no power to make us into new, truly obedient people. Legalists will slavishly try to obey the law, not because they love God and his law, but because they love themselves and want to get a blessing—want to save their own skins. But this slavish obedience obviously is not true obedience. In Jesus' day the scribes and the Pharisees were preserving the law in this latter sense, and Jesus had a running controversy with them. Paul, the ex-Pharisee, said that the law in this sense condemns.

Now, the teaching of Jesus is nothing but a full restatement of the law. "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them." (*Matt. 5: 17.*) Consequently, his teaching can be either a blessing or a curse. If his teaching is declared as the gracious, creative word of God, which makes us new, obedient creatures, then it is a blessing—the gospel itself. On the other hand, if it is presented as a legalistic demand that we must follow if we want to be saved, it is a curse. For in this sense the teaching of Jesus has no power to make us obedient to the genuine demand that it makes. It is then bad news, not good news. If we, therefore, as Christian educators, attempt to teach the teachings of Jesus in the latter sense, we are nothing more than modern scribes or Pharisees, who cause little children to fall.

Just as the law of God is not really understood as the law of God apart from the witness of the Spirit, so the teaching of Jesus is not really understood apart from that same witness. Therefore, according to modern educational definitions of teaching, we cannot really *teach* the Word. We can only witness to him, for we do not have control of the Spirit. So we are not doing anything in Christian education essentially different from what the preacher is doing in the sermon. The differences between preaching and teaching are simply incidental differences, determined by time, place, age of people in the group, the measure of formality or informality, the amount of work expected from the group, etc. But the basic character is the same in both: the witness to Jesus, the creative, Incarnate Word.

Because this is the nature of the teaching ministry of the church, it should be clear that no compromises may be allowed. Christian teaching that is anything less than belief-ful, passionate witness to Jesus Christ is simply not Christian teaching; it is a false witness. Today a very dangerous idea is being spread in high places—the idea that *preaching* is belief-ful, faithful, passionate witness, to be allowed only in private institutions, but that Christian teaching is a dispassionate, impartial examination of the belief in God and of the life of Jesus, and therefore should be allowed in public schools. Such an idea seems to be motivated by one of two things, either of which is bad: (1) the desire to sneak genuine Christian teaching into public schools without the school boards' realizing it or (2) a misunderstanding of the nature of the Christian faith.

To the Christian faith, God is not an object among other objects, to be doubted, looked at dispassionately and judged by men. He is our Creator and Lord. When we know him, we can only confess him, not speculate about him. The Christian faith is not concerned with such questions as whether or not a god exists or whether or not Jesus was anything more than just a good man. In Jesus Christ God has made himself known and, in so doing, has made us his new people. As members of his church, whether teachers or not, we cannot deny what has happened. As Peter and John replied to those who were questioning them about their teaching activities, so we also must answer, "We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard" (*Acts 4:20*).

Also, because of its nature, the Christian faith cannot be "taught" as an option competing with other options. You have probably heard people say: "Many ideologies are competing for the allegiance of our youth. We at least ought to have the opportunity to present Christianity as an option to them, so they can judge for themselves its worth." Statements of this sort

reflect the assumption that Christianity is a way of life or an ideology that we choose or reject, according to some criterion of worth that we have. But the Christian faith is not that sort of option, and to say that it is is to make a lie of it. The testimony of God's people in the Bible, "from cover to cover," is, "We did not choose God; God chose us, while we were lost in rebellion." The Christian faith is not an option chosen by us on the basis of our having found that it is pretty good. This is utterly ridiculous! To enter the Christian faith is to enter a new life that declares all our old standards of right and wrong to be sinful. So, to present Christianity as a "live option" to the youth of the land is to perpetrate the grossest of rebellions. It is to say to the youth, "Judge God for yourself, and see if he is good enough for you or not." No, all we can do is to witness to what we have seen and heard in the Incarnate Word of God. God himself is not dead. He will still send his Spirit to claim his own among the youth of the land. Much of our frantic concern for the youth reflects our disbelief in the God we claim to want them to believe in. We want to do his job, instead of the one he has given us to do. God calls *us* to teach, to witness. *He* will make the witness, the teaching, bear fruit.

Because it is once again popular to be religious in America, a good many schools that would have laughed at the thought a few years ago are now offering courses in religion. These courses are usually in world religions, the Bible as literature, the history of Bible times, the history of Christianity in the West, and so on. Courses of this type are important and have a place in the university curriculum, but it is important that we do not confuse them with the teaching ministry of the church. The Bible is literature, just as surely as Shakespeare's works are literature, and so can be studied from a literary point of view. But the church is not concerned with the Bible as literature; it is concerned with it as the Word of God and so, in its teaching ministry, must deal with it as the Word of God. The nation of Israel had a history just as surely as the nation of Babylonia had a history; therefore, its history is a legitimate topic of research in a university. But the church is interested in that history as a testimony to God's work that culminates in Jesus Christ, a work that is not seen through historical research, but by the witness of the Spirit. And so on down the line. These courses are helpful, but they are no substitutes for Christian teaching—witness.

Among the gifts the Spirit bestows upon the members of the church is the gift of teaching, which is given for the building up of the community. Teaching Christ, therefore, is a responsibility the church cannot shirk. We ought not to expect or demand secular institutions to do this job for us. On the contrary, the church should accept this task gladly as part of its mission, its service, to the world.

Unit III—The Power of the Gospel

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INTRODUCTION

To a city of great riches, ruled by men of power and wisdom, filled with orators, inspired by victorious armies, possessing the magic name of Rome, a quite insignificant man writes a letter. In Rome, a small and unimportant group of people receive that letter. This letter would not be considered very important by the governors of distant provinces who frequently send dispatches to Caesar. Yet in the destiny of the world, something gets twisted. The important letters are forgotten; the insignificant letter survives. The men of prominence are bypassed; God speaks and God is heard, not by the senators and the generals, but, through Paul's letter, by the *Romans*. The initiative passes from those who have ruled with a heavy mailed hand to those who are quite powerless. Through weak and unknown instruments, the living God creates, with a lightness of touch, with merely his *Word*, the outlines of "a new heaven and a new earth."

Who are these frail vessels? Who are these unknowns in whom the foundations of the city of God are laid? Who is Paul? And who are these people in Rome who have nothing more interesting to do than to listen to someone read a letter from a traveling missionary?

Who Is Paul?

About Paul, the New Testament preacher, we know a considerable amount. We know that he was a Jew, a strong defender of the law. We know that, through fanatical devotion to that law, he persecuted his brethren who deviated from it. We shall not forget the story of his encounter with the Lord Jesus and the change that took place in his life. He became, through this encounter, the foremost propagandist for that Lord whose influence he had been trying to destroy.

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Throughout Asia Minor he established and nurtured congregations and became, with the consent of the more conservative church in Jerusalem, the missionary to the Gentiles. It had been his hope to carry his message to Spain; and Rome, the seat of the Empire, would be a necessary point of entry into Spain. But before he could go to Spain or, for that matter, to Rome, he was arrested as a disturber of the peace. In about A.D. 60 he did go to Rome. There he remained as a prisoner for a few years before he died. His letter, however, was written about two years before he went to Rome in chains.

But when we have said this much, we discover that we really have said very little. We shall never know who Paul was by a purely external description. We can only understand him by putting ourselves in his place. The clue to this understanding of Paul is found in the fact that Paul, like Abraham, went from the security of his home and his people to that strange and unknown world of insecurity to which God was directing him.

Christianity and homelessness somehow go together, in Paul's view of the gospel. As a Jew, Paul remembers God had come to Israel in the *wilderness,* that there, free from all the powers with which men control their own destinies, Israel lived in obedience to him who was their only strength, the living God. When Israel became at home in the world, after they *settled* in Canaan and developed commerce and industry, politics and an army, then they forgot their God. Then God sent Israel into exile, separated from temptations of earthly security, that they might again learn to live by faith. And at the time of Paul, Israel had settled again into a religious tradition. But Paul, in the true spirit to which every Jew is called, lived as an unsettled soul whose only inheritance is the living God. He left Jerusalem, but he was not permitted to find a home, not even in some of the churches in Asia Minor which he had started. He had to go farther and farther from those who knew him into the strangeness of a Roman world. Paul, "set apart" (*Rom. 1: 1*), the ambassador of God, a pilgrim prohibited from having a homeland, went to the center of this earth's homeland—Rome.

What Is Rome?

There were two Romes. There was the imperial city of power, the city of Caesar. It was inhabited by men who have a home, who are very much *at home.* In the minds of some of the inhabitants, Rome was the Eternal City. It would never die. Yet it was dying, for God was building a new society. He was building it out of the lives of those who were classified as criminals by the Roman authorities. They were forbidden to exist because Rome would not tolerate new religions that caused controversy. They were persecuted because they were loyal to an authority higher than Caesar. God was their authority, and their only King was one called the Christ. And because neither Caesar nor God could tolerate a divided loyalty, it was Caesar whose days were numbered and God who would be the victor when the crumbling ruins of the proud city finally fell.

No one knows how the Roman church came into being. All we know is that it was ready to hear Paul, that it treasured his letter, and that it was prepared to live by faith, before God, in the camp of the enemy. The church was not blind to the dangers of its position. Yet the power of Rome caused Christians neither to flee the city nor to forsake the faith. As citizens of heaven, they lived in Caesar's city. And so God, who came to earth through his Son, who walked the highways that led to Jerusalem, now walked farther and farther into the land of the enemy. And Paul and the church, because they lived like Abraham—in faith and not in security, dared to go into the wilderness of the spirit, into the city of Rome, to witness there as unsettled spirits to him who had overcome the world. Paul and the members of the church, separated by an ocean, were together before they ever met. Strangers on earth, they were members of the community of faith.

The Faith

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. (*Rom. 1: 8.*)

Those who are poor in the world and rich before God are known only by their faith. Paul does not suggest that the Roman church is known because of its roster of distinguished names or because of its organization or because of its program. One feels that, if he were communicating with one of our churches, Paul, in the pursuit of what really makes a community the church, would also ignore the men's groups, the women's groups, the buildings, the new furnaces, and the new organs. Paul is very clear here. None of the accidental characteristics of the church are permitted to clutter up what really matters. He is writing to the Romans, and he is coming to them because, and only because, he knows that the community which God has established is more powerful than all the kingdoms of the world.

Apostle and Gentile

Although he speaks to the Romans in terms of the faith that holds them together, Paul mentions other matters also. There is a special reason why he writes and why he intends to visit them. Serious misunderstandings are prevalent in the congregation as to *how* the faith is to be understood. In order to clarify these matters, Paul writes this letter. But by what authority does he instruct them? Why should they listen to *him?* Here we must look back to the first verse. Paul sees himself, not only as a servant, but also as an *apostle.* Now, an apostle is distinguished from other believers in that he bears the special responsibility that comes from having been an eyewitness to the resurrection (*Acts 1: 22*). Inasmuch as the resurrection is the center of the New Testament, those who have observed it have a special responsibility to inform and witness to it.

As he writes this letter, Paul is in a peculiar position that requires great tact. The church at Rome owes nothing to him. He is not their spiritual father as he is of the churches he established at Corinth, Philippi, etc. Someone else, perhaps Peter as tradition suggests, started the church in Rome. But, on the other hand, there is a semiofficial agreement between Paul and the mother church in Jerusalem that Paul is to be a missionary to the Gentiles. So he is fulfilling this special calling in desiring to visit them. (*Rom. 1: 13.*) Paul is ready to preach the gospel, and what he has to say cannot be said by a stranger or by someone without authority. Paul is an apostle, and his semiofficial status as a defender of Gentile churches gives him the right to speak.

Servants and Saints

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, . . .
To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (*Rom. 1: 1, 7.*)

However, it is not his authority that Paul wishes to emphasize. In introducing himself, he sets his relationship to the Romans upon its highest level. More importantly, he tells the Romans that he, Paul, is a *servant* of Jesus Christ. On this definition alone, he dares to make his entrance into their community. When all is said and done, everything else that Paul could say about himself is not important. He could speak of his wisdom and his schooling in the law. He could speak of his important connections. He could speak of his skill as an evangelist. He could mention the churches in Asia Minor that owe so much to him. But he does not choose to enter the Roman community in terms of skills, connections, or accomplishments. He comes merely as a servant—"a servant of *Jesus Christ*." And when he addresses the Romans, we must note that he sees them also in the same way—"To all God's *beloved* in Rome, who are called to be *saints*."

Paul, the servant, addresses himself to those who are "called to be saints." In speaking of the Romans as saints, he appeals to their highest understanding of themselves. Again it is an understanding from the point of view of their relationship to God. It is an understanding that makes sense in relation to something *God* has done. The Romans are not saints in their own right. As Paul understood the word "saint," this was impossible, for sainthood does not mean moral purity or any state that man can accomplish; it means, instead, *being set apart by God and for God.* It means being an instrument and a vessel through which God accomplishes his will in history. It means being a member of a community in which there are no distinctions of person. It means freedom from the artificial prestige that the world confers upon some men and from the equally artificial insignificance that it confers upon others. It means freedom from the dehumanization of class property, race, and country. (See *Gal. 3: 27-28.*) The other world has grown dim—the world of master and slave, of aristocrat and plebeian. The memory of the great kings is fading. Something new has happened; a brotherhood has appeared upon the earth, a community of men who know one another simply as *servant* and as *saint.*

Paul, as we all know, had been a faithful Jew, so faithful to the form of his religion that he went out of his way to persecute those who could not think exactly as he did. Then something happened on one of his journeys. Paul, strong and proud, who had haled men to their judgment, now himself stood under God's judgment—and those who emerge out of God's awesome judgment emerge as servants. This is all that is left.

Now the picture becomes clear. Behind the drama of Paul's letter we can see the issues and persons of the drama. Two authorities are at work. Over against Caesar and his mighty armies stand the living God and his frail instruments. The battle lines are set: on the one side, the sword, and on the other side, only faith. And it is in this battle and the unbelievable victory of faith that we find Paul, "a servant of Jesus Christ," and that we find the church of Rome, the saints of the living God.

UNIT III — 1

MAN'S DESTINY IS EASTER

Read *Rom. 1: 2-6, 16-17.*

THE faith of Paul and the faith of the church in Rome is a new faith. At least the Roman authorities see it as new and, for that reason, forbid its practice. Paul recognizes that the expansion of the church is a new movement, but he knows that the faith is not new. He tells his readers that this gospel had been "promised beforehand through [God's] prophets in the holy scriptures." The faith associated with Jesus Christ is not a religion dreamed up by some men in Jerusalem. It isn't new at all, since this faith, although it has just recently appeared, has been written into the foundations of the world. The Christian faith is not a fashion of the moment. It can only be understood if one sees it as an expression of God's love, grounded not in Peter or in Paul, but in *God's* promise which had been given to the prophets. (See *Isa., ch. 53.*)

Paul writes to the Romans about a gospel, a specific Christian gospel. He desires to tell them "concerning

his Son, . . . Jesus Christ our Lord." This is more difficult than it sounds. Paul could, with more ease, talk about himself. It would be very human to talk about his sacrifices. He had suffered because of his faith. He had given up a great deal. He could have been a leading figure instead of a homeless Christian. But he doesn't speak of himself, except as "a *servant* of Jesus Christ." The servant must talk about his master. Being a loyal follower, Paul does not make the mistake of thinking that anyone is interested in *him*.

Paul tells his readers that Jesus "was descended from David according to the flesh." Jesus was born a Jew, a true Jewish human being. According to Paul, he is so human that his ancestry can be traced back to David. Paul's emphasis was important then, and it is important now. Well-meaning but misunderstanding people were trying to look at Jesus as though he were a god, as though he had not really been in the flesh. Some thought of him as a ghostly, superhuman figure who had merely borrowed a human body. One of the reasons people thought this way was that, since they associated Jesus with God, they did not like to think of God (or Jesus) suffering. One of the tales of this period said, for instance, that Jesus left his *borrowed* body before he was crucified. But Paul insists that Jesus was a real man.

We should be able to understand this feeling. We, too, grow accustomed to thinking of Jesus as the Son of God; we forget that he really shared this life of ours. Jesus becomes buried under the paraphernalia of our worship. We raise him up until he is very far beyond us. As we remember all that he has done for us, it is difficult to remember that he bore his love while afflicted by all the burdens of hunger, suffering, temptation, and, finally, by the agony on the cross. He "was descended from David according to the flesh." He belonged to the earth, just as we belong to the earth. He is no angel, nor does his life belong in a fairy story. He belongs to the life we know and live.

Paul would not permit false teachers to turn Jesus into something that he was not, a stranger to our life, a foreigner who would not know what it meant to be a human. If Jesus were not "descended from David according to the flesh," he could never know the anguish, the sorrow, and the hope of being a citizen in our world of war and peace.

Paul, arguing for the humanity of Jesus, does not stop with that point. Jesus is fully human, but he is not *merely* human. Hence Paul tells his readers that Jesus was "designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead." Into the human situation, Jesus brings the power of the living God. He *shares* our agonies and our sorrows, and he *answers* our agonies. This is the heart of the Pauline faith. The resurrection marks the passing of the old world of guilt and fear and sin. It is the beginning of the world of grace and obedience.

What did Paul and the church mean by the resurrection? We need to look at it as they did, not as a strange "miracle," which by its very strangeness excites us into belief, but as the expression of God's redemptive activity. "By his resurrection from the dead" Jesus is "designated Son of God in power." By the resurrection, a hungry world is filled. By the resurrection, a lost world is found. By the resurrection, *we* receive a Lord. The world apart from the resurrection is the world that is confused, wandering, far from home, without a Lord. With the resurrection, men are given a King. Before the resurrection, even the disciples represent only confusion, disagreement, and misunderstanding. When we look at Paul and Peter before the resurrection, we do not find much in which we can rejoice. All that can be said of the human beings gathered around Jesus during his earthly life has been said by Mark who, speaking of the action of the disciples at the time of the arrest, merely reports that "they all forsook him, and fled" (*Mark 14: 50*).

With the resurrection, the scales fall from the eyes of the disciples. Greed is overcome; and we watch the followers of Jesus burn themselves out in the service of their Lord. Confusion and uncertainty give way to purposeful living, and the fear that robbed men of their strength is annulled. Such is the story of all who have believed, from the time of the first disciples to the present day.

How the resurrection occurred we cannot know. We are far removed from that first Easter morning when despair was changed to joy. There will always be questions that we cannot answer. But one thing is sure: the church at Rome knew what the resurrection meant. Every Christian knows what it means to see that Lord whom God gives in the resurrection.

For Paul, the most important fact about the resurrection is that it has happened. Mankind *now* has a Lord, the Son of God with power. We live in the age of redemption. What does that really mean? *It means that the Christian is separated from every belief that holds that redemption is in the faraway future. The Lord is risen now.* The man who prefers being lost does not like the idea that God has overcome the powers of evil. It is much more flattering to believe that somehow, by hook or crook, our own will power can heal us—tomorrow. When we believe in our will power, we prefer to live without a Lord now, to live only with the promises that we make for tomorrow, promises that never control our behavior because they are so quickly broken.

Pagan man always lives his present life for the sake of the future. The communist looks toward the final stage of history when capitalism will be overcome—then men will be free and life good; meanwhile, since there is no resurrection, the present does not matter. The capitalist also looks toward the future when, in a hundred or more years, he will achieve plenty and justice for the poor and the Negro. He does not need to examine very carefully the obligations of the present. But Paul believes that the resurrection has happened, that the Lord has come. Does this not mean that the

Christian is taken out of that never-never land of tomorrow and brought face to face with the Lord exactly in this present, this very-minute present? Doesn't this mean that wherever our life touches another human being there is either a grave or an Easter between us? Does a grave of broken promises and forgotten hopes separate us from our children or our parents or the other members of our communities? Or is the resurrection a bridge of forgiveness and mercy that brings together those whom misunderstanding and guilt, hope and fear, have separated?

For Paul, Christ is risen from the dead. In the resurrection God gives us, with complete fullness, that power of love, humility, and obedience for which we have so halfheartedly waited. We shall see, as we go on, that Paul's whole conception of the Christian life rests upon the faith that God's truth and God's power *now* walk the earth. For Paul and the church in Rome the brave and daring words were "we have received grace and apostleship to bring about obedience to the faith for the sake of his name among all the nations."

Righteousness and Faith

Paul is "not ashamed of the gospel" of Christ. He is not embarrassed because God's power and not his own delivered him from his sin. God's redemption has come, and "it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith." Paul does not look at the Christian faith as a belief that men have created. He understands it as the "power of God."

In the gospel "the righteousness of God is revealed." In order to understand what Paul meant by God's righteousness, we must remember the Old Testament: God's righteousness is always an activity intended to make Israel righteous! God's truth does not hang out in thin air. It overcomes untruth and unrighteousness. God's righteousness is his healing, his mercy toward and his restoration of Israel. God's righteousness is man being made right again with God, right again with himself, and right once more with his neighbor. Paul is not ashamed of that kind of gospel. God accomplishes this healing; his righteousness, not ours, saves us from our sin.

The cross helps us more than all else to understand the righteousness of God. The cross reveals human sin in its most terrible form. All the hidden sin of humanity breaks forth when God's innocent Son is slain. The dying Jesus shows us, as nothing else can, what we do to those who cannot defend themselves. We might want to forget what the cross forces us to remember: We remember the Negroes brought from Africa against their will, children laboring in sweat shops against their wills, and women and children bombed out as war machines roll across the earth. When we remember what God does not permit us to forget, we know what Good Friday means, and, with the early church, we live through the agony of the cross. But neither the agony nor the cross is the end. We are not left with our guilty memories, for in the resurrection we see that the cross we have made is replaced with the life that God recreates. Here, as we have made the wrong, God is making the right. Here God makes whole again what humanity has destroyed. Here God draws all who are willing to measure themselves by the cross and who dare to acknowledge his victory over our sin and death.

However, although it is God's righteousness to which Paul would direct our attention, this does not mean that we do nothing. "He who through faith is righteous shall live." Those who are justified by God [made righteous by God] shall live by faith in God's righteousness. The cross makes it impossible for us to live by our righteousness. Faith means two things: It means that we refuse to trust in ourselves or in our own shoddy promises, and it means that we trust in God and

Is man's destiny his character? Such an affirmation is frightening, for it says, "All that I can ever hope to be, I now am."

his mercy. Recently one of our churches illustrated what Paul did *not* mean by faith. The bulletin board in front of the church bore the message, "Man's destiny is his character." Paul would have said, "Man's destiny is Easter." The first saying, looked at from the viewpoint of the cross, is most frightening, since it says, "All that I can ever hope to be, I now am." Paul is much more bold and hopeful, for he is saying that at Easter God makes us over again—God gives us the chance for more love and kindness than we ever dreamed was possible. Faith dares to believe that we can yet be, by God's power, what our guilty consciences tell us we cannot be—servants instead of enemies of the living God. Faith rejects all attempts to postpone God's demand. Faith dares to believe what Caesar, communism, and capitalism cannot understand, that we serve him *now* completely and joyfully without regard for ourselves, our property, our politics, or even our nation. If you can believe both what the cross reveals about you and what God reveals for you in the resurrection, then you know what Paul meant by saying, "He who through faith is righteous shall live."

UNIT III — 2

SIN, THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT

Read *Rom. 1: 18 to 3: 20.*
This article deals particularly with *ch. 3: 9-20.*

Is SIN human error, born of ignorance, that knowledge can correct? Is it selfishness that education can cure? Does sin exist in the minds of preachers for the purpose of producing a lot of unnecessary guilt? This sort of question leads us to ask others. Why should Paul, so early in his letter to the Romans, plunge into a description of our sinful situation? Just what exactly is all the excitement about?

Sin is a *predicament.* It is a problem to us, as it was to the Romans. It seems to be part of our situation as human beings. It seems to be both regrettable and inescapable. Although it sometimes expresses itself in habits, sin itself, unfortunately, isn't a habit that can be changed. We can change habits. But we can't change sin, according to Paul. Sin, like an implacable foe, pursues us, and when we are most confident of escape, then we are most surely in its clutches. We are caught again and again by this alien power, falling into its dominion willingly. We seem to have some control over our actions, but we have very little control over our hearts.

Paul is asking his readers to look into the interior regions of the human spirit and not merely at the outer action. This *inner* spirit causes us to put ourselves always in the right. We would rather have men think well of us than be truthful with ourselves. Being afraid, we are constantly shading the truth to our advantage. We feel that we must protect ourselves and our rights. It doesn't often occur to us, therefore, that in protecting our rights we deny the rights of others who feel the same way about their rights as we do about ours. As a matter of fact, it doesn't often occur to us that our inner spirits are warped and shriveled. We want to think of ourselves as we really are, inside—heroic, bright, lovable, wonderful people. Unfortunately, our friends and neighbors do not see us that way. Thank goodness they don't. If they could see our pitifully grasping, fearful, little, inside selves, they might run in disgust. Why? Because, according to Paul, our inner spirits, our wills, have fallen into the clutches of sin. That is what all the excitement is about.

The Universality of Sin

Let us begin by agreeing with Paul. Sin is more terrible than we sometimes care to admit. There is a great deal more of it in our lives than we want to talk about. At the same time, some of us will feel that Paul is being unnecessarily gloomy about sin. Granted that sin exists, is the picture as black as Paul is painting it?

> *"None is righteous, no, not one;*
> *no one understands, no one seeks for God.*
> *All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong;*
> *no one does good, not even one."*
>
> (*Rom. 3: 10-12.*)

Notice how Paul emphasizes that *no one* understands, that *no one* seeks for God, that *no one* does good, *not even one.* Is the situation really that bad? Isn't there any difference between people? Shouldn't Paul recognize that there are degrees of sin? If we admit that there is a great deal of sin, shouldn't we also ask Paul to admit that some people are less sinful than others? Isn't there a difference between a man who openly curses God and one who is at least trying to find God, even though his own sin stands in the way? Paul seems to be saying that there isn't any difference between a man who gives in to sin and one who struggles against it.

Most of us would be tempted to disagree with Paul. We live in a very complicated civilization, and it is important that we be able to tell the difference between people who are corrupt and those who are at least trying to do what is right. Wouldn't Paul's position make it impossible to vote? How, if all are under sin to the same degree, can one tell the difference between a congressman who fights for justice and one whose vote can be bought by the highest bidder? Why, in the face of such real difference between a Hitler and a Lincoln,

es Paul talk in this peculiar sort of way? Our perexity isn't solved simply by remembering that Austine, Luther, and Calvin talked in the same strange ay. Why is it that these writers seem, in a way, to be impractical, and why do they, with their emphasis universal sin, leave us so unsatisfied?

We need to be fair to Paul. He knows that there are al differences in behavior and that these differences unt for something. He can tell the difference between ultery and real love (see *I Cor., ch. 5*). He himself stinguishes between those who are obedient and those ho live as they please (see *Eph., ch. 6*). At the same me he insists that "no one does good, not even one." his is the problem. How can he say that there are imrtant differences and yet that *no one is righteous?* et us try to see what he means by this statement.

In the first place, let us ask ourselves a question: hy are we so bothered by his statement? Are we some those relatively good people who must be protected om Paul's sweeping remarks? Generally we attribute odness to people who behave as we do. Although we re willing to allow Paul to speak of the sin of our emies, we are not so willing to have him speak in the me way of the sin of our friends. It is always difficult believe in the goodness of those who hold a set of leas radically different from our own. Thus the comunists limit the good to their own way of life. A busiessman is more likely to think that the philosophy of nother businessman represents virtue than he is willng to accept the point of view of a labor leader. In the ame way, we resist Paul because, whenever we think f virtuous people, we are really thinking of people who re like us. Perhaps if we stopped thinking that our ind of virtue was absolutely right, we should not be so tubbornly set against Paul's judgment. We should be little suspicious of our own thinking, and never beieve too emphatically in our virtue. To do so is to give n to the worst kind of delusion. The Christian especially must say that "no one does good" (not himself r his friends), "no one does good." God alone is the udge of what is good.

Sin and the Law

For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin. (*Rom. 3: 20.*)

Paul has to face a special problem. He has been arguing for the terrible depth of sin. Now he faces the problem of the law. True, man is without righteousness. But men are conscious of the law of God; Jews and Gentiles know what God demands of them. If they didn't know what God demanded, they wouldn't be accountable. The tragedy of man is that he knows but does not obey. The law of God, although known to every civilization, is a special problem to the Jew. To the Jew, God has given his law explicitly as a blessing. The law is there; God has spoken. No Jew can plead ignorance.

At the same time, "no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin." What the law requires is not knowledge of its existence, but obedience to the God behind the law. The Jews cannot exempt themselves from the charge of sin by pleading familiarity with the law. God doesn't demand familiarity; if he did, he would have a nation of lawyers. We know that God's demand is that we love one another. Here the problem of knowing but not doing the law becomes tragically significant. Loving one another and knowing the love commandment are simply not the same thing. Paul looks at the law in much the same way that the author of The Letter of James does, who writes, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only" (*ch. 1: 22*).

Paul always thinks of understanding God in a concrete way. To him, the knowledge of God always means the service of God. If we merely know of the existence of the law and conform to it outwardly, we do not really

understand the author of that law. When Paul thinks of understanding, he means giving oneself gladly to keep the intention of the law. He doesn't mean a grudging, halfhearted obedience, nor does he mean simply being aware of the existence of the law.

A teacher once told of a conversation that she had with a lazy student. Each time he was criticized for failing to do his work properly, the student said, "I know that I am lazy and that I waste time." Every time he said *I know* he seemed to think that this excused him.

Paul is saying much the same thing about the people of his world. Knowledge of God involves, not knowledge of the law, but obedience to the Lawgiver.

"For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin." The purpose of the law is to open our hearts to all that God requires of us; it is not to put God's demands on a minimal basis. The law should enlarge our horizons instead of narrowing them. Through the law God teaches us to heed the life he has created and thus the life about which he knows best.

God has given the law. It is written both in our religion and in our very being. He does not give us the law to teach us to rely on ourselves; he gives it to remind us what life is all about and who he is. If we really understood the law and its gracious demands, we would see how *helpless* we really are. We don't live

graciously or even justly; if a man reads the Ten Commandments honestly, all he can say is "God help me!"

There are people today who find Paul both too gloomy and too complicated. All that is needed, they say, is to live a good life. They have no interest in grace, atonement, or forgiveness. Living according to the law of the Sermon on the Mount is good enough for them. One would think so—if they really did live by it. Whoever imagines that he lives by the Sermon on the Mount is either not very honest or not very bright. Look at what it requires: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you." When we read that, do we find anything in our lives to make us confident? Paul would think that such a law would fill us with fear. Does God require so much of us? Isn't being decent enough? No, for the law bids us "bless those who curse you." The law of God reveals how far we are from what God demands. We apparently don't know anything at all about the life God intends us to live.

A chaplain once returned with his troops from bayonet practice. Leaving behind the hate and the symbols of cruel death, the men, that evening, went to a church service during which the Ten Commandments were read. When the chaplain came to the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," he read it very slowly and paused. He said nothing, and yet every man in the chapel knew that God was standing over against what it had been necessary for them to do. In the uneasiness before the law of God, men could see how really helpless they were. Thus does Paul understand that "through the law comes knowledge of sin."

Through the law that God gives us we discover our sin. In the loneliness of sin, in our uneasiness, we discover that God is speaking a word of blessing to us, even though his love brings us pain. He is calling us to place our trust in him and his everlasting mercy. In the promise that the law contains, we may see Jesus Christ, who breaks the power of sin within us so that we may *keep* the law in our hearts.

UNIT III

3

THE HELPLESS PRODIGALS

Read *Rom. 3: 21 to 4: 25.*
This article deals particularly with *ch. 3: 21-31.*

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law. (*Rom. 3: 21.*)

THE *righteousness* of God is revealed apart from the law because human sin has corrupted the right attitude toward the law. A strange thing had happened to the Jews. The law that God had given to lead them to him had become an obstacle between man and God. Instead of revealing to men their need of God, it had made them proud and taught them to rely upon themselves.

They had become legalists and perfectionists. They devoted so much of their energies to fulfilling the law that they lost their humility. This is a danger which every religion faces. God demands obedience, and somehow people substitute their own little schemes for God's righteousness. Some of the Jews of Paul's day insisted that the Kingdom of God could not come until every Jew had kept every law for two Sundays in a row. Our own church has always had its share of this spirit. For instance, in it are those who insist that salvation depends on the "prohibition" law; others insist that the Sabbath laws be kept in such an absolute sense that only an invalid could enjoy Sunday; and still others insist that the church will be pure only when it performs the sacraments in just one certain way. Whatever the form of the law, all these people have one thing in common: They are setting up in their own minds their little schemes or ideas of what it is that must happen before there can be true redemption.

But the righteousness of God is never just the way we would imagine it. We can never quite make God into a prohibitionist or a vegetarian. Nor can we legitimately insist that he is primarily interested in just which form of the sacraments we use. God is God, and he never quite conforms to our human expectations. Paul would agree with the prayer of the writer of The Book of Daniel: "To thee, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us confusion of face."

Paul recognized that even the most zealous and religious men can twist the law to suit their purposes. He could not help but see this when he remembered what happened to the Messiah. In part, Jesus was rejected as the Messiah because he did not fit into the way that men expected the Messiah to come. By faith the prophets had known that, in spite of evil and suffering, God would be triumphant in the end. They had dared to believe that, in spite of dictators and tyrants, the final word was not yet in. But, at the same time, men believing that the Messiah would come, had created him in their own image. The men whom Jesus called to discipleship shared with their age the belief that the Messiah would be a royal and powerful king; therefore, these same men forsook Jesus and fled; their own ideas got between them and the Messiah whom God gave. For Jesus came, not as a king, but as a suffering figure who renounced power and invited the disciple to share with him the renunciation of an earthly Messiahship.

God is God, and he is not contained in the boundaries that we set for him. The law that he gives to

waken men to their dependence upon his grace is not be used to hold him off. God comes in the time of his oosing, and his coming is not postponed because men sist that they must first make themselves respectable keeping the law. God does not wait. While religious aders are concentrating on the keeping of the law, od comes, and the leaders are so busy with their own eas of how salvation will come that they do not see e holy figure standing by their side. This is human n, perhaps of the most terrible kind—to love one's vn idea of religion and not to see the new way in hich God reveals himself. Therefore, Paul emphasizes at "now the righteousness of God has been manisted apart from law."

ustification by His Grace

There is no difference between those who have the w (the Jews) and those who do not have the law (the entiles), since it is not the law, but God, who justies. What does Paul mean by "justification"? The ord "justification" suggested to Paul's readers a urtroom scene. The lawbreaker, or criminal, is rought before the judge. Standing alone before the dge in that awful moment before sentence is passed, hat can the criminal do? He can try to *justify* himself. e can give excuses for his conduct. He can plead norance of the law. He can claim that he was temporily out of his mind. But whatever he tries to say will ot change the fact that he is guilty, that he has comitted a crime. He cannot *really* justify himself. Whatver he says will be a rationalization and a lie. He is elpless because of his crime and because he stands efore the judge.

There is only one thing the criminal can do, and at is to do nothing. He can only confess his sin and row himself on the mercy of the judge. The judge lone can *justify* him by exercising mercy and forgiveess.

Paul, here, has a deep insight into the healing of the uman personality. How can a sinful man be made hole again? How can the man who has emptied himelf of his purpose and meaning regain that purpose? in isn't something that we do; it is the emptiness, the ollowness, that we find within ourselves when we have hosen to turn away from God. The farther we go from od the less power we have. If a man goes out farther nd farther from God, constantly losing his strength ith each step, what will happen if he decides to reurn? How *can* he return if he has spent his strength? ow does the prodigal son of Jesus' parable return? e returns only because he dares to believe the impossible—that his father will accept him back. Without at belief the prodigal could not even conceive of going ack. He has good reason to believe that the folks at ome hate him or have forgotten about him. Yet he elieves the impossible: his father, at least, might forive him.

The parable of the prodigal son should be entitled e parable of the prodigal father. And we should think of this parable as we consider Paul's words to the Romans about justification. Paul's metaphor of the courtroom scene should be taken for what it is—a word picture intended to help us understand what God in Jesus Christ has done. Paul is declaring to us something about God. Because the law has become a curse—producing legalists and perfectionists instead of a faithful people—God has now done something else: he has manifested his righteousness "apart from law."

The people have fallen guilty, but they can no longer even imagine what their guilt is. The people think that they are guilty because they have violated a Sabbath regulation or two. What is their real guilt? Life has become a nervous and joyless wake. The people could find no better way of despising God than to turn away from him to his law. God has made it consistently clear, through the Law and the Prophets, that life *is* life when people live daringly and sacrificially—for the neighbor, the stranger, the widow. Then justice and the right are *championed*. Exhilaration springs from risk, not from alcohol. Now, there is the problem: Guilty man stands before God without quite knowing what he is guilty of. Hence, he is incapable of understanding that God wants, most of all, to set him free from his idolatrous concern for the law so that he can once more obey the God who is merciful in his judgment. From a prodigal's point of view, that sort of God is really the prodigal one—lavish with grace.

Paul is saying that we are "justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (*v. 24*). The story of the prodigal son and Paul's picture of the court convey the same notion of the incredible love of the Father. When the sinner comes before God, he is completely dependent upon God. God alone can justify him, pronounce him righteous. It is God who acquits men before the law. It is not the law, nor is it man's will power; it is the grace and mercy of God, freely given, that restores us to him.

But the grace so freely given always asks something of the criminal. The criminal cannot stand sullenly before the judge, utterly indifferent to his punishment. No criminal can expect that the judge would even consider him if he, the lawbreaker, was proud of his sin. The judge tries to find in the criminal some sign that he understands his situation, that he knows what he has done and before whom he stands. What the criminal can do is to confess his sin and place his trust in the judge. Trust does not mean that he expects to get off scot-free; trust means only that he is content to have his case judged and that he knows that, whatever the judgment, it will be just. The judge seeks the sign of repentance and trust. The sign, for Paul, is faith in Jesus Christ. God is the justifier of "him who has faith in Jesus."

How does belief in Jesus represent the sign of penitence and trust? If we go back to the story of the prodigal son, we could say that, for Paul, Jesus signifies the outstretched arms of the father; he is the sign of the divine mercy. At the same time, he is more than that,

and it is here that Paul's thinking goes farther than the story of the prodigal son. The crucified Christ tells us *also* of our sin. When we come before the judge, we must look where our eyes do not want to search. We must remember what we would like to forget—that we are in the Divine Court of Justice, not because we have broken some minor traffic law, but because we have transgressed God's law in the most terrible way—by killing the innocent One, his only-begotten Son.

God is the justifier of "him who has faith in Jesus." Paul nowhere says that God is merciful to those who believe that the sunrise is beautiful. Belief in nature is not the sign in which God finds our penitence and our trust. Nor is belief in one's country the sign in which God discovers that we know what we have done. Nor does Paul declare that God justifies those who believe in the family, in civic decency, or even in that virtue so dear to American sentiment—mother love. There is but one sign, *Christ crucified*. When our faith is directed to Christ, we are made aware of both the mercy of God and of our own guilt. It is Christ "whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood . . . to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins."

Notice the reference to "his blood." In the next article we shall discuss this more carefully, but, for the moment, notice that Paul points our faith to the suffering, the dying Messiah. It is the Messiah's suffering and his death that we are asked to remember as we stand before the judge. We are asked to believe that he whom we have crucified brings our redemption. Here is the agony of faith. It is the blood of redemption that keeps faith from being cheap. It is the blood of Christ that reminds us of the *cost*. We cannot accept God's mercy without also accepting our terrible sin. The arms of the father are outstretched, but they are outstretched over a hill just outside Jerusalem.

God calls us to him as he reminds us of the unfinished business of the cross. We return to God, but, in returning, we are asked to pass the graves we have created. We are permitted to come back to God, but only if we acknowledge what we have done. God invites us to come, but not suddenly, dressed with a virtue that doesn't fit us. We go back with our previously hidden and now discovered ugliness. We had not realized it before, but we have made a mess out of life. We return as those whom the cross has made true again, as those who, knowing what they have done, also know how desperately they need God's mercy. The believer now dares to admit his criminality. He does not pretend to be only a little guilty, but acknowledges that he has crucified God's Son.

So Paul speaks of *justification*. God forgives and justifies those who stand before him, acknowledging the guilt of the cross and daring to trust in the mercy of the Father. Such daring, such trust, such faith in God, is what Paul means by faith. It is God who justifies, not ourselves, not the law we think we keep, not our will power, but our firm belief that God's love is greater than our sin.

UNIT III

4

THE GRACE WHEREIN WE STAND

Read *Rom. 5: 1-11.*

THE word "grace" has become a familiar part of our everyday speech largely because "grace" occupies a central place in the vocabulary of the Christian faith. A graceful dancer or a gracious hostess or gracious remarks by a speaker now stand alongside a gracious God. "Grace" means smoothness. niceness, acting in pleasing ways. Although Paul would probably disapprove of some uses that our modern world makes of the word "grace," he would strongly approve of the *intent* of the uses. God is not like a graceful dancer or a speaker who says nice things or a hostess who makes wise preparations for the comfort and enjoyment of her guests. But the intent of God is to bless, to deliver, to free mankind from bondage to sin. Stripped of irrelevant sentimentality, we meet in Paul's letter to the Romans a God who *loves* us.

The Love That Redeems

The love of God makes it possible for man to be a normal human being. Paul tells us that, through the divine love, "we shall be saved from wrath." By wrath Paul means the inevitable destructive consequences of sin. The moral framework into which God has placed us is absolute; sin is never left unpunished, and, in the end, justice will be triumphant. There is no escape from this law. If a man breaks the law, he sets into motion certain forces from which he cannot escape. If, for instance, a man deceives his neighbor, then it is absolutely certain that the mark of that deception will be forever on his character. If a man makes himself into a tyrant, then it is inescapable that he will lose both the respect of his neighbors and his own self-respect (no matter how much he tries to hide it).

Paul believes that we are delivered from such wrath by God's love. God himself enters into his own order of justice, stoops, and lifts us up before we are destroyed. Only God's mercy can redeem us from destruction; only God can change the consequences of our behavior. How does this happen?

While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a

"While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."

righteous man—though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. (*Rom. 5: 6-8.*)

God loves us, not when we are virtuous, but when we are still sinful. This is a new kind of love. Paul finds it remarkable that God should love a *sinner*. God's love is an obviously different love from man's love of power, money, and position. It also differs from the highest forms of human love. A soldier, in a certain sense, acts in love when he risks and gives his life for his friends and his country; unlike the man who seeks mere wealth, the soldier actually risks his life for those whom he loves. A mother will normally risk her life for her child; the life of the child is more important than her own life. Paul recognizes that in these cases there is a certain kind of noble love—"Perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die." However, the soldier gives his life for *his* friends and *his* country. The mother risks her life for *her* child. A soldier will not risk his life for his enemies. A mother will risk her life for her child, but not for the criminal who is a threat to the child.

But God's love is of a different quality. It is without limitation. It is given not to those who serve God, but to those who are at enmity with God. "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." God's love is therefore not limited to the "good" men. God loves the *ungodly*. God loves those who have rejected his prophets and who have killed his Son. Paul finds in God the same love that Jesus demanded when he said, "Love your enemies" (*Luke 6: 35*).

Such is the love Paul sees in God. That God would forgive us, that he would love us *still*, in spite of the fact that we have crucified his Son—this is the love which is complete. It is this kind of love to which a child psychologist referred when he said that "a child is most in need of love when it is most unlovely in its behavior."

We human beings may talk about love as if we understood what it means. Sometimes we even talk about it as if we had created it. But Paul reminds us that when we talk of true love, it is God to whom we must turn our minds. It is the love that gives up the Son for the sake of the Son's enemies that shows the true meaning of the word.

"Now Justified by His Blood"

Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation. (*Vs. 9-11.*)

When Paul spoke of the blood of Christ, his first readers understood what he meant better than we understand. The sacrifice of animal life was a normal part

of the Jewish religion. From earliest times men had believed that it was an obligation to share with God the fruits of the harvest and the flock. They brought their sacrifices to the Temple for preparation by the priests. The sacrifice signified the willingness of the giver to offer his life and substance to the service of God.

Although the official religion welcomed sacrifice, there was a minority of the Jewish thinkers that pointed out its limitations. Many of the prophets had felt that sacrifice focused attention on the wrong thing. They felt that what God required was justice; so long as men sacrificed animals or grains, they were likely to believe that this was all that God required. One of the greatest protests against sacrifice was made by the prophet Micah:

"With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
He has showed you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?
(*Micah 6: 6-8.*)

The readers of the letter to the Romans would know that Paul was referring to the Jewish tradition of sacrifice when he spoke of being justified by the "blood" of Christ. Paul, however, is much closer to Micah than he is to the priests who encouraged the people to make their own sacrifices. He wants his readers to see that all their sacrifices are as nothing compared to the sacrifice that God made. When he refers to the *blood of Christ,* he is changing the whole idea of the sacrificial system. The notion that God either desires or is satisfied with our sacrifices is broken by the shock of God's own sacrifice. It is God, not man, who gives himself for the atonement of our sins.

This idea is at the very center of the Christian faith. It is stated perhaps most perfectly in the Gospel of John: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." Paul is holding to the same point. God's great sacrifice, his love, is not limited to the virtuous, but is freely given for the sinner. This is what grace means, after all: *God's favor to the undeserving.*

The idea of the divine sacrifice, the immeasurable love of God which heals man, centers our eyes on a new note, a note that distinguishes the Christian faith from every other faith. For the first time, through Paul's words, we are enabled to see both Jesus and the Old Testament separated from all humanistic attempts to center attention on man. *God* is the Redeemer. By *his* love *he* stoops to our weakness; by *his* sacrifice we are healed.

Paul speaks of this healing as the "atonement" (*Rom. 5: 11,* KJV). He means God has taken away our guilt. The law of God does not ignore human sin. Men who abuse God's law are guilty. The evil that we have done cannot be undone, and yet that evil can be forgiven. The God against whom we have sinned can save us from the just punishment that is due us. He can save us from ourselves. He does this by bearing the punishment, by bearing the sin, and by permitting his innocent Son to die. Every reader of Paul's letter would understand that Christ died for him; every believer would know that, by God's mysterious love, Christ himself had chosen to suffer rather than permit man to bear the cross.

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that made us whole,
and with his stripes we are healed.
(*Isa. 53: 4-5.*)

"This Grace in Which We Stand"

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. (*Rom. 5: 1-2.*)

Protestantism takes its stand on these words of Paul. Our peace is solely through Jesus Christ. We know no other Lord. We have no other strength. He is our peace.

On what do men stand? Men have stood on various powers. There are men who stand on the power of their own wills. Others have staked their lives on their country. Others have believed in their own cleverness. There are men in every civilization who have a supreme confidence they can win every battle by their wits.

Sometimes we can see that we ourselves live and stand on such principles. When the world seems to turn against us, we may sustain ourselves by an admiration for our own superiority. Sometimes when we feel most injured by life, we are even able to nourish our bruised ego through pitying ourselves. Paul, on the other hand, knows nothing of this kind of strength. Our life and our hope are fulfilled in "this grace in which we stand."

Nor does Paul have any confidence in the works of the law. We cannot place our trust in our good works; we cannot place our trust in our own incomplete and limited love. Here Paul—and every Protestant—stands apart from the Roman Catholic emphasis on salvation through works. Good works are a part of the Christian life; Paul sees them as the fruit of faith, but they are not the ground on which we stand.

So long as we follow Paul on this point, we have a eeper sense of what our redemption means. Because e are so aware of our sin, we can trust in nothing less nan God. We cannot be content with an outer reforma- on of our life; we cannot find pleasure in the fact that e sometimes force ourselves to be decent. Rather, we ovet for ourselves the freedom to live as our Lord ved, the freedom to live in complete and absolute ve. It is the inner renewal, the transformation of life, nat we seek. We know that we have no strength to e pure and perfect, but we also know that God requires o less of us. Therefore, our trust is in him who has mmended "his love for us in that while we were yet nners Christ died for us." When we begin to seek for me strength outside ourselves, we turn from self- lmiration to the faith that God loves us. And faith lls us that this love is everything.

The advantage of Paul's position on grace is that frees us from concern for ourselves. As we trust God, we become simple human beings who can serve God and our fellow men without always feeling that we must watch out for ourselves. Instead of trying to compromise by giving 50 per cent of our life to God while keeping 50 per cent for ourselves, we learn in our dependence on God's grace to give devotion to him who made us. This is what Paul means by being a servant of the living God. The servant gives his life *without reservation* to the service of his Master. As servants, our joy and hope is that "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand."

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that [by grace] suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. (*Vs. 3-5.*)

NIT III

5

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

Read *Rom., chs. 6; 7.*
This article is based particularly on *ch. 7: 7-25.*

F WE lost everything that Paul had ever written ex- cept these few verses, we would still have his entire eology. In previous verses, he has been alternately ttacking reliance upon the law and defending justi- cation by faith. He has made a strong case. He has own his readers that their redemption depends not pon their will power, but upon God's loving power. herefore, salvation consists of faith and gratitude ather than striving. Paul has directed the minds of is readers from what is human to what is divine, and e has assured them that the meaning of the Christian aith is to be found in a relationship of trust.

In order to emphasize *justification,* he has been inimizing the law. The law's only function seems to be give us knowledge of our sin (*ch. 3: 20*). Suddenly aul seems to realize that some of his readers might isunderstand him. Perhaps they believe that Chris- anity means that man may *live as he pleases.* Paul sks and answers this question: "What then shall we y? That the law is sin? By no means!" He is very mphatic and is properly horrified by the thought that meone might use what he is saying as an excuse for oral laxity. Paul is a Jew, and, as such, he could never e sympathetic with anyone who flagrantly violated e law or who imagined that he was above the law's aim. The same God who gave the gospel gave the law!

Paul realizes that the law has become a curse be- use the faithful community has become corrupt (re- ll Article 3). However, the law was not originally ven as a curse, but as a blessing. *"Torah,"* the He- brew word for the law, actually means "instruction," or "teaching." Both the Greek and Latin languages have words more similiar in meaning to our English word "law," or "regulation," but this concept of "law" ob- scures the fundamentally Hebrew meaning of *"Torah"* as the teaching of God. So, even though Paul, writing in Greek, used the Greek word for "law," he wrote as a Jew would about the *blessed* law of God. Thus Paul sees that in the community of faith the people live under the Torah (law). The Torah provides order. The covenanted man cannot do as he pleases. He must obey God who has taught him how to live in his home, how to live in his shop, and how to live in his neigh- borhood.

If the faithful man does not obey God and begins to live as though the law were a lot of religious talk that has no place in the shop or home or neighborhood, then he no longer has the peace, justice, and wholeness that are the good gifts of God to a faithful people. He cannot make war and have peace. He cannot be un- faithful to his wife and enjoy her trust. He cannot cheat his neighbor and have a good life with his neigh- bor. He cannot be a tyrant to his children and have their respect at the same time.

When the people of God disobey God by ignoring the way he has taught them to live, they do not thus erase the law from their memories or from their books. It stays there as an indirect judgment on them. They may no longer be holy or just or good, but "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good." Life is given and ordered by God. We are born, we live, and we die within the framework that God has given.

The Law Reveals Hidden Sin

The Christian, taking his place in the "New" Israel, will especially acknowledge his debt to the law, since the law helps him recognize what faithful life is. The law forces unbelief and disobedience into the open. "If it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.' " It is not easy to say why this happens. Each of us could think of many illustrations of how it happens. If you tell a child that he may not cross the street, then the child feels an increased desire to do so. When we are forbidden something, then we are determined that we shall have or do what is forbidden us. The more laws that limit us, the more we are frustrated and the more we scheme to get around the law. By the law we stand revealed as deceivers, as schemers, as sly cheaters. The law doesn't make us into tricksters. It starts us into motion so that we act out the trickery that lies sleeping within us. "I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Paul is really writing the story of every man. It will remind each of us, not only of our own experiences, but also of the first "man," Adam. Adam, of course, is not a single individual, but the symbol of every human being. You will remember that Adam and God lived in an innocent manner until God told Adam not to eat of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." We all know that as soon as Adam (or Eve) thought about that teaching, he was determined to break it. Paul affirms the same mystery. God gives us the law and, as soon as we become conscious of it, we become lawbreakers. Without the law, we would be untested. Without the law, sin would be hidden. With the law, sin comes to life; it literally breaks out. By it man discovers his separation, his distance from God; he discovers that there is a price to pay, that he must henceforth live outside Eden. So Paul sees the law. It brings to the surface what would otherwise be hidden, and what is hidden must be revealed if we are to become truly human.

The Divided Soul of Man

In the following verses (*14-23*) there are three main ideas. Paul wants to show the *helplessness* of man, who is caught between two warring forces in life, the *law of God* and the *law of sin*.

The law of God is the surest thing that man knows. It is the one fixed point in man's changing world. By it man can chart his course as surely as the sailor can find his way by the sun. Everything changes, but not the law. Civilizations come and go. Man begins as a primitive savage; he moves slowly through the ages until he is able to direct nature for either good or evil. Each new group that comes to power rejects the wisdom of the old order, but finds that it is confronted by the same moral law. Human regulations can be repealed and human governments can be overthrown, but the law of God is more eternal than the sun. Furthermore, just as man's governments change in history, so do they differ in each generation. Men in the United States, in England, in China, speak different languages, but each must struggle with God's law. It doesn't matter whether the law is recognized by the people or not. It stands behind them and their thinking. All may betray it, but no man gets around it. Poor men and rich men, weak men and strong men, none can escape that law which Paul says is "binding on a person only during his life."

Paul speaks also of another law, the "law of sin." We can no more escape this law than we can escape God's law. As surely as there is a moral law in history, so sure is it that there are traitors to that law. Men in every walk of life will bend God's law to their

own interests. History is the record, not only of man's knowledge of the justice that God requires, but also of war, injustice, persecution, and suffering. Who would argue that this law is escapable? Who imagines that corruption and betrayal can ever be avoided? There is a perversity about all human experience that seems to run counter to the law of God.

Sometimes it is easier to see one law than the other. Optimists usually see all history as only the working out of the law of God. For them, evil is only temporary or an illusion. Good is bound to triumph in the end. On the other hand, the pessimist is the one who cannot see God's law because his vision is concentrated on the law of sin. Nothing is really good. You can be more certain that men will cheat you than you can be confident that they will be honest. The law of sin always wins out.

Now when the optimist thinks about man, he is bound to think of him as a good man. Usually he will think of him as a hero, strong and mighty, overcoming all obstacles. The optimist will emphasize man's courage and honesty; but when the pessimist thinks of man, he will think of him as a coward and a scoundrel.

Paul's view is a little more dramatic than that of either the optimist or the pessimist. He doesn't think of man as good, like the optimist, or as evil, like the pessimist. Paul would not know how to account for the evil in history if men were good, nor would he understand how to account for the conscience of man if man were evil. Paul's view is more complicated and truer to the facts of human experience. His view is that

although man knows the good, he does the evil. "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." The best word to describe Paul's view of man is the word *tragic*. Man does not live by one law but by two. He lives in the middle of a contradiction. Paul *delights* in "the law of God" but he also sees "in [his] members another law at war with the law of [his] mind."

What shall we make of this idea? What does it mean to live in the middle of two laws that contradict each other? What man has not been struck by the struggle within him? Who can forget how quickly one moves from love to corrupt love? One of the greatest illustrations of this "doubleness" in man is given by a Russian writer, Dostoevsky. In the book *The Brothers Karamazov,* one of the characters, Mitya, tells about the problem of his love. He is agonizing because within his love there is both purity and perversion:

"God sets us nothing but riddles. Here the boundaries meet and all contradictions exist side by side. . . . I can't endure the thought that a man of lofty mind and heart begins with the ideal of the Madonna and ends with the ideal of Sodom. What's still more awful is that a man with the ideal of Sodom in his soul does not renounce the ideal of the Madonna. . . . The awful thing is that beauty is mysterious as well as terrible. God and the devil are fighting there and the battlefield is the heart of man."

Mitya's struggle, like Paul's, is the struggle of every man. This is man's problem and his tragedy. God and the devil are fighting in the heart of man. If he could be good, or if he could be evil, he could have some peace. But he is both, and he is torn between the two. "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do."

Now we can see why Paul views man as being so helpless. Man has a will, but "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it." He is weak and incapable, with his heart divided between the flesh and God's law. Facing the law of God and the law of sin, he finds himself unable to choose decisively. He is a hollow man, filled not with resolution, but with straw. The laws are strong. God calls, and sin calls too; and man hears them both and is unable to obey either completely. The law of God is good, but it is a torment to Paul since he cannot obey it. The law is good and stands above man—far above him. Man is below the law—far below it. High over Paul there is a command that he can never quite forget: "Thou shalt not covet." Below, where he lives, there is a world of covetousness of which he is a part. The stars shine brightly above while man is caught below in a world of envy, jealousy, and greed. Man sees the light above him, but the light only makes him miserable as he is wallowing in the mire below. "We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin."

Is it any wonder that Paul's faith in God should be so strong? How could man be confident in himself? All that Paul can do is to give a cry of anguish: "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" It is *deliverance* that is required. Someone else, whose love is without limit, must stoop to man's weakness. It is God alone who possesses such love. It is God who enters into man's life and breaks the deadlock between the law and sin. Man is not left alone and miserable in his covetous and sinful world. God comes to him, and with deep gratitude Paul gives the answer to all human need, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" The power that Christ brings is the power of redemption, a power that restores him to a *new* relationship to God, because God gave a gospel so that we can keep the law.

UNIT III — 6

THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US

Read *Rom., ch. 8.*
This article is based particularly on *vs. 1-27.*

PAUL, in *Rom., ch. 8,* speaks of the Holy Spirit. He tells how the Spirit helps us, what the Spirit makes us able to do. Unlike the Roman Christians, we may not be able to make much sense out of his ideas of the Holy Spirit, since we have lost touch with the Biblical ideas. We consider ourselves to be Trinitarians, believing in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; but although we are able to explain our belief in God and Christ with some degree of intelligence, when it comes to the third Person of the Trinity, we are tongue-tied. Protestantism has somehow failed to give its followers a living sense of the reality of the Holy Spirit. It will only be possible for us to recapture what has been lost if we are willing to go back to the world of the Bible, and especially to the Old Testament, since that is Paul's background for his discussion of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, God is understood in two ways. In the first place, he is understood as the majestic Creator and sovereign Ruler of history. He is holy and sacred, and before him "the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales" (*Isa. 40: 15*). God is so far beyond man that "he . . . sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers" (*v. 22*). But God is

not simply the Creator who is far beyond man. He also is able to be intimate and personal while remaining the Creator. Thus the psalmist wonders:

When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars which thou hast established;
what is man that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of man that thou dost care for him?
(*Ps. 8: 3-4.*)

This is one of the great mysteries of the Biblical faith—that it is able to speak of God not only as the infinite Being who controls the universe, but also as the One who enters into a special and personal relationship with man. When the infinite God comes into such a personal relationship with man, it is always through his Spirit. The Spirit of God always signifies his closeness, his intimacy with man.

Originally this spiritual closeness was associated with the *breath* of God. So it is that in Genesis it is said that "the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (*ch. 2: 7*). The Spirit, or breath of God, signifies not only the closeness of God, but also man's life coming from God. The early Hebrew understood the breath as life itself. Take away man's breath, and you have killed him. Give a newborn infant air in its lungs, and it begins to live. The life, that which gives us motion and vitality, comes from God. Without the Spirit of God we are only so much dust. Thus the psalmist can say:

When thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.
When thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created. (*Ps. 104: 29-30.*)

The Spirit is always associated with the intimacy of God's presence. He is always the source of life. By the Spirit God makes dead material, such as dust, become a living soul. Wherever the Spirit is present, life is coming into being through either creation, renewal, or redemption.

This idea of the Spirit as the intimate and life-giving power of God is also assumed in the New Testament. According to the Gospel of John, Jesus imparts power in the following manner:

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (*John 20: 21-22.*)

And in the book of The Acts, Pentecost is described in a way that suggests the church's origin came from the wind that God had set in motion in the lives of the apostles. (See *Acts 2: 1-2.*)

So when Paul uses the word "Spirit," his readers will know that it indicates the *life-giving presence* of God. When the Spirit enters into the heart of a man, he is moved to act as God would have him act, to be *alive* in a spiritual sense. When men begin to live, then the Spirit has come.

Flesh and Spirit

In *Rom., ch. 8,* Paul speaks at length about the flesh. The flesh is not evil, according to Paul's view. It is weak, and weak because it is Spirit-less and power-less. The body is, however, not a source of strength. When the Spirit is not present, the body is impotent. It is only biologically alive, not alive to God.

The flesh is not evil, and yet there is something evil *about* the flesh. Paul says that "to set the mind on the flesh is death" (*v. 6*). The carnal, or fleshly mind, is at enmity against God. What is evil is not the flesh, but the *trust* that we place in the flesh. Jeremiah had said:

Thus says the Lord:
"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm."
(*Jer. 17: 5.*)

Flesh is not just body; for Paul, flesh includes mind and heart too. It is the situation of life without God, i.e., the Spirit. We are unjust to think of the people who "set their minds on the flesh" as those *other* people who are preoccupied with sex or alcohol. We are not being fair to Paul. Being "spiritual" is a way of expressing a mind set on the flesh as surely as being boorish can express the same thing. People who set their minds on the flesh live their lives on the basis of the clues provided by society and its schools, by the economy, or the Government. They may live a very good life, a very decent and altogether proper life. But their minds are set on the flesh. They even get their ideas about God from other *people!* "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

The Spirit and Christ

But Paul reminds us that Christians "are not in the flesh." Our minds, because of the divine love, are no longer centered in human *strength*. Our bodies, once so weak in the service of the Lord, are now quickened by the "Spirit which dwells in you."

How does the Christian know that the Spirit of God is moving him? In Paul's day, and ever since, there have been many who have claimed to be inspired by the Spirit. Very frequently, people have assumed that since the Spirit gives life, the evidence for the presence of the Spirit is to be found in a frenzied excitement in the believer. Paul was not thinking of this kind of behavior. We are united with the New Testament world in believing that the Spirit must be of Christ. "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." (*Rom. 8: 9.*) Elsewhere, in *I John 4: 1-2,* we have an even firmer admonition:

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.

Both John and Paul are pointing back to Jesus. If you want to recognize the Spirit, you will do so by looking at his activity in relation to the life of Jesus. What is not in the life of Jesus cannot, and should not, be in the life of the Spirit. Inasmuch as Jesus does not give us the picture of an emotionally unbalanced life, we need to be doubtful about any kind of "spiritism" that simply reflects an excited and primitive exhibition.

The Spirit and Suffering

In *Rom. 8 : 12-25* Paul emphasizes that we are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ." How do we know this?

It is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God. (V. 16.)

What does this mean? How does the Spirit bear witness for us? Paul is thinking of the initiative that God expresses in his relationship to man. Karl Barth, in his book, *Dogmatics in Outline,* asks us to "think of the men of the Bible. They did not come to faith by reason of any kind of proofs, but one day they were so placed that they might believe and then had to believe in spite of everything." This is what the Spirit means: that one believes in spite of everything. Perhaps some of you have found yourselves discouraged with the church. (It has a lot that is discouraging in it.) Perhaps some of you have been even more discouraged with yourselves. Perhaps you have asked yourselves the question, "When I look at myself honestly, what right do I have to call myself a follower of Christ?" And then, perhaps, in spite of all your questions, in spite of the weakness of the church and your own unworthiness, you find that you are *nevertheless* a follower of Christ. This is what Paul means by the Spirit. Only God's Spirit can convince us that he wants us *in spite of everything.*

Now Paul gives us an even better test of the authenticity of the Spirit in our lives. The Spirit is not mere emotionalism or feeling. Paul says that we are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him." (*V. 17.*)

Notice that Paul is saying that we are heirs *if* we suffer with Christ. The real mark of the presence of the Spirit is not feeling, but living the kind of life that risks security and hence generally has to suffer.

It has been said by some that Christianity is an easy religion. All that is required of a man is that he keep a few simple rules in this life; then he will be rewarded with heaven. Such a statement may be a true picture of the way Christians have sometimes behaved, but it is not true to the Bible. The religion of the Bible is not an easy religion of rules. It is a religion that requires a man, because of faith, to be willing to suffer for God. Thus Abraham leaves the shelter of his native land and becomes a wanderer for God. Moses leaves his comfortable existence and goes back into Egypt to risk death in order that God's people shall be set free. The prophets stand against their society, risking not only death, but dishonor and isolation.

Living in the Spirit involves the risk of losing one's life. Jesus said: "He who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it." (*Matt. 10: 38-39.*)

When men live by the Spirit, they risk making enemies of those who glorify the flesh. The Christians in Rome knew that they had to make a choice. They could follow Christ or Caesar, but not both. That they were willing to risk their life and property for the sake

of the Christ was the evidence of the Spirit in their lives. Without the Spirit to lead them, they would have relaxed into some compromise with the worship of Caesar.

We reveal the Spirit's presence if, when we are confronted with two ways of conduct that allow us to choose between an easy and a hard way, we take the always costly and usually unpopular road. "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets." (*Luke 6: 26.*) The man who finds himself justifying materialism as a way of life is only coveting the applause of those who live by the flesh. The believer who lives by the Spirit will not bow to the Caesars of this world.

It will also be true that we, who live by the Spirit, will *mortify the deeds of the body.* We will not only risk unpopularity, but we will also discipline our own flesh. This means that the believer will bravely submit his life and habits to the Spirit. He will not take himself for granted. A father who gives up the proud authority by which he forces his child to obey him learns something of suffering as he begins to bear the burdens of his children instead of merely commanding their obedience. Each of us can think of many ways in which we avoid the suffering that belongs to the life of the Spirit. When we live in the flesh, we are willing to cause suffering to others because we are trying to avoid it for ourselves. In the Spirit, we bear the suffering that unites us with our Lord.

Paul's view of the Spirit is now clear. We are in the Spirit when we share Christ's sufferings; yet, we do not suffer alone. "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness." (*Rom. 8: 26.*)

As we suffer, we find ourselves strengthened. He who sends us on our journey does not forget us. He who invites us to take up our cross and follow Jesus does not forsake us. When we begin our Christian life, we are uncertain; but the closer we come to the cross, the surer we are that *God is love.* Strangely, our strength increases as we become weaker. As we lose *our* authority and *our* power, we find ourselves with those who, led by the Spirit, can cry joyfully, "Abba! Father!"

UNIT III — 7

WHAT CAN CONQUER GOD?

Read *Rom., ch. 8.*
This article is based particularly on *vs. 31-39.*

IN THE concluding verses of the eighth chapter of Romans, Paul brings his readers to the final affirmation of faith. Earlier, when he was discussing the law and human powers, he was skeptical and doubting. Now, as he pictures the life of faith, his words ring with confidence and trust. Even though the world is filled with danger, treachery, and evil, a man can live hopefully and bravely *in faith.*

Acquittal

Man faces many dangers. He is threatened by disease and death. He is threatened also by dishonor and the loss of his integrity. An even greater threat is one that he most frequently chooses to forget—the threat of God's righteousness, which holds him accountable for his sin. But if men ordinarily forget conscience, Paul does not. In the picture that he has given us of justification, he has shown us how the sinner inevitably comes and stands before the Judge. He has shown his readers that their only hope consists in throwing themselves on the mercy of the court. Man is justified by Christ's death and not by his own efforts. God commends his love to us sinners, and when God expresses his love, when the Judge declares his pardon, then the case is concluded. "If God is for us, who is against us?" (*V. 31.*) If the Judge frees us, then nothing more can be said. The Judge is the final authority. The Judge alone has the power to give man his freedom. Since God *is* for us, he has shown his forgiveness and his love in a way that cannot be doubted. "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?" (*V. 32.*) Whenever man finds reason to doubt himself, he comes up against this fact—God has seen fit to give his only Son for man's salvation.

Paul knows that there are two great forces that are moving men's lives. One force is the terrible reality of sin. The other force is the greater power of God's love. Paul knows that there is a sinful law "at war with the law of my mind" (*ch. 7: 23*). There is a persistency about sin that is frightening. We resist sin, and yet it charms us. We push pride away, but secretly it lays hold of our hearts. It is characteristic of sin that it should be strongest when we are most disgusted with ourselves. In such moments we can see only our sin. There are times when we know only Good Friday, and it seems as though Easter could never come. Hopelessness sets in. We know that there is a God, but doubt that he can really help us. We have tried over and over again to cleanse ourselves and have failed. What, then, can God do? We just aren't worth bothering about. There is too much against us. Our book is too full of black marks, and they cannot be erased. At the same time, Paul knows that the most powerful thing in the world is the love of God. We may charge ourselves with the most severe sin, and yet God has the *final* word. "Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn?" (*Ch. 8: 33-34.*)

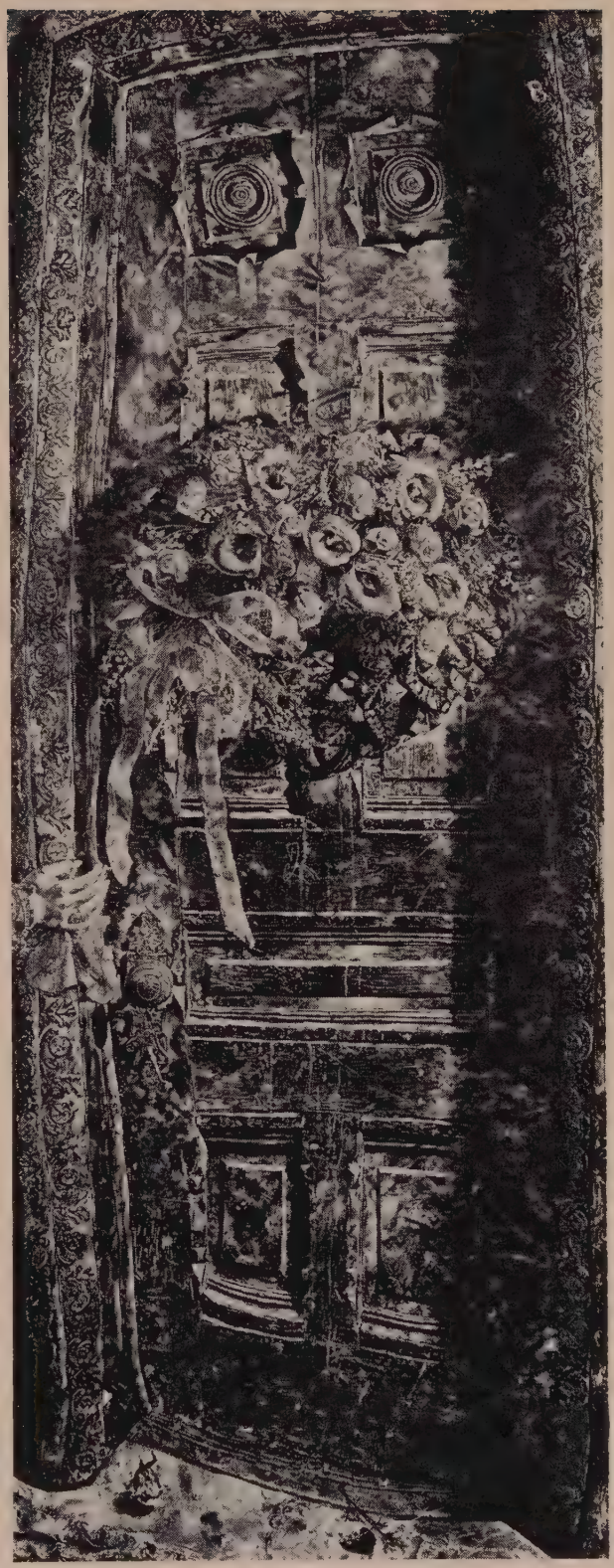
From Paul's point of view, the greatest sin would be to insist that God could not cure sin. Perhaps we allow ourselves to think that we are hopeless because we would like to be hopeless, would like to be free from the responsibility of faith. Sin is a threat, but God is greater. Evil cannot be denied, but it is not the final word. In faith, the sinner knows that his sin has been conquered and that God has won the victory. We are guilty, but "if God is for us, who is against us?"

A practical illustration of Paul's point is found in the life of prayer. Sometimes it is very difficult to pray; sometimes one would rather not pray. Prayer seems hypocritical and meaningless to a man who is *bound up* in the hopelessness of his sin. Once sin begins to rule life, it always convinces man first of the hopelessness of his condition. We begin to feel that sin is present and that there isn't much that can be done about it. So we begin going to church less and less, and rarely pray until the time comes when we are *shut up* inside ourselves. God still exists, but he is so far away that it is impossible to talk to him. Sin rules, and it teaches us to be silent and hopeless.

It is at this point that the practice of the church is such a good illustration of the reality of God's love. What the church does is to open our lips through its prayers. We may come committed to silence, but when we come, the whole order of worship tells us of the conversation that God is having with the church. A

That Which I Should Have Done
I Did Not Do

By Ivan Le Lorraine Albright



church service is precisely that—a conversation between God and man. In the Scripture and the sermon we face a God who speaks to us. In the responsive reading, hymns, and prayers, the congregation is answering God. The church thus takes us out of our isolation, opens our hearts that we may hear, and opens our lips that we may confess. The church—and its life—is, as it were, God's provision that we shall not be bound up in ourselves, facing only the hypnotizing reality of our secret sin. Together with others, we are taken out of our *aloneness* and placed in the situation where we must hear God's speech to us, his speech that invites us and calls us out of the solitude that is the condition of sin.

Our private lives are filled with guilt, and alone we can do nothing about our sin. Sin is real, but God and his love are much more real. Each day we discover the weakening effect of sin. And yet, at least once each week, we are brought out of ourselves so that we may stand before God to hear of his love and mercy. It is God who opens our lips, and when this happens, his love has overcome sin. "If God is for us, who is against us?"

The Love of Christ and Suffering

The greatest power in the world is *the love of God.* This isn't the easiest idea in which we can believe. With Paul, we can understand the miracle of forgiveness by which God's love is understood to be even more powerful than our own sin. At the same time, we recognize that the world is filled with evil and suffering. Paul does not pretend that it is otherwise. Thus he speaks of all the pains that afflict man—tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword. The victory of the divine love does not give us a world filled with rainbows. The notion that "every cloud has a silver lining" is not a Pauline idea. Life is not a technicolor movie in which the villain is punished and the innocent rewarded. We and Paul know that it is otherwise. We know, too, that it is the innocent who suffer. Paul does not permit us to think of the gospel in a dream world. The power of God is victorious in a world of suffering, hunger, danger, and death. God's renewal of life is in the midst of life. Even in the greatest of suffering, none of these things shall "separate us from the love of Christ." Wherever there are storms, wherever men die and women weep, there faith shall live—not on the edge of a wish world, but in the middle of the real world. *There* faith enables us to live.

There have been religions which have taught that

the right understanding of God helps to lift us out of the world of pain. We are all familiar with various religious sects in our own time which teach us that faith wipes out pain and poverty. If a man really believes, we are told, evil shall disappear, and the man will live in health and prosperity. Of this kind of faith Paul knows nothing. He expects these evils to continue until that final day when God will redeem the whole creation (*v. 23*). All Paul can guarantee is that nothing shall "separate us from the love of Christ." We are assured that the love of Christ is the one sure fact in our lives and that it will not be displaced even though we suffer tribulation. We are sustained; we do not live for health, nor for plenty or prosperity, nor because men speak well of us. All for which the world struggles, all the goods of this world, cannot uplift us. We are not dependent upon them. A man who is prosperous and important is no closer to God than a man who is ill, persecuted, or poor.

In these words Paul has revealed the freedom of the Christian. We cannot sell our souls to those who promise us security and freedom from suffering. Freedom from suffering is not the end of our lives, since, in Christ, we can bear all things. Christians are not for sale. We cannot be bought by the promise of security. The values of the world are not our values. We live by the love of Christ. Herein is our meat and drink.

Doesn't Paul really mean that the Christian is freed from the *fear* of suffering? Frequently, we are led to believe that it is of the utmost importance that we live to avoid suffering. There are those in our midst who would tempt us to believe that our life depends upon the supremacy of the white race or the supremacy of the United States in world affairs. Not at all; we are not to be won by such promises of power. The attainment of power is not the end of our life. We live by the love of Christ. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Paul's resounding answer is given in *v. 37:* "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Nothing "Shall Separate Us"

For him who lives by faith, the surest truth is the never-failing love of God. How sure is this love? How can Paul be so sure that we shall not fall from faith? We are constantly being tempted. We are not strong, and we know that, like Peter, we are perfectly capable of betraying our Lord. We cannot escape our weakness, and we cannot count on our own strength. If Paul were counting on human strength, his gospel would not have much of a future, but he is relying on the fact that God's love is the pivot of all human hope. Nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The attempt will be made to separate us. We are not free from the need of God's help. The forces that undermine our wills and our strength are many, but they cannot prevail because God is King and Lord over our lives. The power is his; so we shall not be taken from our faith by "death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation."

Paul is thinking, in using these strange phrases, of all the *powers* that lay siege to men and rob them of their faith. Paul is speaking of all the forces that, in the ancient world, seemed to have an existence of their own. If Paul were speaking today in our language, he would speak of all the pressures that play upon our fears and make us anxious. We are anxious about so very much. Life and death are perhaps the simplest and the most ever-present. We cannot forget that we may die, and that we some day *will* die, and we do not find death a pleasant prospect. When we think of the *present* and *things to come,* we are filled with uncertainty. Will tomorrow rob us of all the good things that make our lives so comfortable? Our lives are very insecure. War or calamity may rob us at any moment. It is easy to feel ourselves giving in to this anxiety, and we may well fear that the anxiety about the future might cause us to lose our faith. The New Testament is perhaps more aware than we are of these spiritual dangers.

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! for it is written,

'You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.'"

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him. (Matt. 4: 8-11.)

It is Christ alone who is victor over Satan. It is Christ who takes away the victory of anxiety over faith. We cannot. We remain frail. We are not heroes. Nevertheless, Paul is confident that no person and no fear shall "separate us from the love of Christ."

If you think of Paul's point, you will find, I am sure, that it has been true of your own experience. We have not been entirely faithful. Too easily do we give in to fear. We *are* anxious about tomorrow, so anxious that it is difficult to trust God. There are times when we falter, and there are times when there doesn't seem to be much point in continuing as a Christian. God seems to have chosen frail vessels into which his love is to be poured. And yet, somehow we return—or we are returned. As Paul puts it, "for I am persuaded" (*v. 38,* KJV; "sure" in RSV). We too are persuaded. God has chosen us to be his instruments, and although our will is weak, his is strong. What gives Paul comfort and hope is what has given hope to every Christian since—that we are where we are and that we believe as we do, not because it satisfies some need in us and not because we are capable of keeping our life on an even keel, but because God has spoken, has made his claim upon us. And thus—before all the terrors of life, Paul can say with perfect assurance, "In all these things we are more

than conquerors through him who loved us" (*v. 37*).

The confidence of faith rests upon the continued expression of the divine love. We fear and falter, but God does not leave us. We become silent, but God breaks through the walls that we build. We try to forget our God and our calling, but God does not forget us, and because he remembers we cannot forget. The love of God surrounds us and saves us each day from our weakness. In God is our confidence. Because of God we are not afraid of life or of death, of today or of tomorrow. In God we live and believe and know that our tomorrows are in his care. We know that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

UNIT III

8

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

Read *Rom., chs. 8 to 11.*
This article is based particularly on *chs. 8: 28-30; 11: 1-12.*

WE BEGIN today a study of Paul's doctrine of election. To the modern mind it will appear to be a strange doctrine. More nonsense has been written about this idea than about any other of the Pauline doctrines. Let us read the text very patiently and carefully as we try to see just what it is that Paul is trying to tell his readers in the church at Rome.

Election and Redemption

We must begin by correcting the translation of *ch. 8: 28*. The verse reads, in our present text, as follows: "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose." This text can easily be misunderstood, because it seems to be saying that *our* love for God causes the universe to work to our advantage. Paul could not mean that, since he does not believe that the world does work for good. Pain and suffering do not disappear simply because love is present. Indeed, Paul's emphasis on the cross would suggest the opposite. Also, Paul would reject the notion that *our* love causes good to come. Paul is always trying to have his readers see that the opposite is true. It is *God's* love that renews and redeems man and his social order. This is why Paul concludes the verse with the words, "those . . . who are called according to his purpose." A better translation would be, "To those who love God, God makes all things work together for good." The *good* would then not mean good as man sees it, but good in relation to God's purpose for man. The good, as God seeks it for man, always comes through what is very difficult to call good—namely, suffering. Hence, Paul could say in an earlier verse, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (*v. 18*). The good that comes to us when God causes love to be born in our hearts is always the good for his redemptive truth. Pain and suffering may continue, but they have a meaning; and those who love God are privileged to see their meaning and to understand that, in spite of what seems to be a failure, God's ends are being worked out in our lives.

If we are to understand Paul's view of election, we must keep in mind the two main ideas that dominate his thinking. In the first place, Paul has an unshakable conviction that man is frail because of his sin. At the very center of human personality there is a conflict that seems to make redemption impossible. "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." (*Ch. 7: 19.*) On the other hand, although from the human point of view he believes that redemption is impossible, Paul knows that God is faithful and that he has redeemed man through the atonement. "Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God." (*Ch. 5: 9.*) Man is both helpless and lost, and yet he is also redeemed. How can this be explained? Paul tells us what it means by the Old Testament doctrine of election: "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined" (*ch. 8: 29*). How can we understand this?

Election or predestination is always associated with *redemption*. It is never used in connection with purely personal decisions. God does not control man's behavior. Sometimes the idea of election is made into an idea of fate. It is separated from the grand scheme of redemption. Some of you will have known people who argued foolishly that God determines everything that will happen. There are people who live (perhaps they only talk) *carelessly* because of the idea that they will die only *when their time comes*. They argue that there is nothing they can do that will influence the length or brevity of their lives. *Everything* is supposed to be determined ahead of time. Such an idea has nothing to do with the Bible, and certainly Paul does not mean this when he refers to foreknowledge and predestination.

In the Old Testament, election has nothing to do with the simple practical decisions that men make in their everyday existence. It always concerns the fulfillment and the redemption of history. It has nothing to do with the way in which men tie their shoes, cross the street, or brush their teeth. We must do Paul justice and understand that election has something to do with the larger issues, the crucial events of world and personal history. If the Bible is right, God does not stoop to trivialities, but he does help men to fulfill their lives in his word.

In the Old Testament, God is seen as influencing

history. It is God and God alone who provides men with opportunities. It is God who gives Israel freedom. It is God who leads them out of slavery to fulfillment in Canaan. It is true that God seems to be determining the decisions of some of the important leaders, such as the kings of Israel, the Pharaoh of Egypt, or the Assyrian emperors. However, even here, he is said to be determining their decisions only in the areas of their larger responsibilities. God uses nations and kings to bring about his purposes. Thus the Assyrians are used to punish the Hebrews. In this sense, and in this sense alone, can it be said that God is determining history.

On the whole, the idea of election is used to show that Israel comes into existence because its existence must be understood in relation to God's purpose. The prophets resisted the ideas that Israel became a great nation because life is merely the result of accidents or because Israel had a special strength and virtue that caused it to succeed. If the prophets of the Old Testament had lived today, they would have denied, for instance, that America was a great nation because it possessed some special intelligence or virtue. Instead, they would have affirmed that we were a great nation *only* because God had created us for *his* purposes. (See *Ezek. 16: 1-22.*) Thus the doctrine of election is a way of introducing Israel to a sense of humility in regard to its power. Over and over, the people are asked to admit that the nation came into existence by divine invitation and not by some natural right. In its simplest terms, the idea of election means that we believe what we believe, and we live as we live, not by some power of ours, but by God's mercy. It is this sense of dependency upon God that Paul is trying to create when he speaks of the fact that God "foreknew."

At the same time, we still must face a problem in regard to Paul's use of the word. It can be interpreted in two ways. Some Christians have believed that the idea of God's *foreknowledge* means that God has decided ahead of time the names of those whom he is going to help "to be conformed to the image of his Son." It can be argued that God is omniscient, and therefore every-

thing that happens is already written in his mind. According to this view, there isn't much that can be done about man's relationship to Christ. God has already decided that you will be related or that you will not be related. In either case, there isn't much that one can do about it.

It is, of course, difficult to tell just what was in Paul's mind. He doesn't tell us *how* he wants his readers to interpret the passage. Does he want us to read it as though it were literally true, or does he simply want to give *an emphasis* to the grace of God? Those who argue that the passage is intended to be an emphasis will state that it is presumptuous for anyone to say just what God's behavior would be. It is sinful to talk about foreknowledge in a literal sense, since we are saying what God would do if he were like us. This would seem to be the worst kind of idolatry. Man can never know the mind of God, nor how it operates; therefore, we have no right to claim that God behaves as though he were a glorified clerk, checking names in a little black book according to some incomprehensible plan. The people who hold this view say that Paul could not have meant us to take him literally, since no Jew would ever imagine that he could read the mind of God. What he meant to signify with the word "foreknowledge" was simply to stress the fact that faith comes by God's help and not by our efforts. It is merely Paul's way of giving God the glory for the faith that the Christian possesses.

Whichever interpretation one follows, it is clear that Paul is talking about something other than determinism. When he speaks of foreknowledge he is thinking only of our being "conformed to the image of his Son." He is asking his readers to recognize that their faith comes from God and that it is not their own creation. We believe, not because of ourselves, but in spite of ourselves.

The Remnant

Paul, in spite of his dim view of human accomplishments, has confidence that "at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace" (*ch. 11: 5*). Paul is trying to explain to the church in Rome why it is that so many of the Jews have not accepted Jesus as the Messiah. The early Gentile churches were continually being weakened by Jewish teachers who, with the authority of the Jewish tradition, sought to weaken faith in the Messiah. The practical problem was this: How can Jesus be the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament if the Jews do not recognize him as such?

Paul is saying that the Messiah is the Messiah because he is sent by God and not simply because he is accepted by a large number of people. Paul would not subscribe to the notion that the Messiah is ever the winner of a popularity contest. He therefore shows that the history of the Jewish (or any) people is the history of their misunderstanding of God. Neither Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, nor Jeremiah had received much popular support, and yet, later generations found that God had been speaking through them. So, too, Jesus stands in this role when he says:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" (*Luke 13: 34.*)

So Paul, by appealing to the Old Testament, has shown that the rejection of Jesus by his people is really

not a very good argument against his being the Messiah. Paul might have argued the reverse. Had he been accepted too easily, it would have been unlikely that he could have come from God.

Therefore, the Christians are the remnant "at the present time." However, Paul emphasizes that the remnant is also "chosen by grace." The Christians do not exist in their own right and, therefore, are not to be filled with self-righteousness. The Christians are not to become proud. They are what they are because of grace and, therefore, can only give thanks to God. Again, Paul is saying that the faithfulness belongs to God alone, and it is upon God's faithfulness that the church is to be built. By God's mercy and eternal faithfulness a remnant is preserved. In spite of human hardheartedness and pride, God preserves a minority who are his instruments and through whom he brings his truth anew and afresh to each generation of his wayward sons.

The remnant of God, his saving yeast, still remains in spite of the fact that the majority have rejected God's Messiah. Therefore, "salvation has come to the Gentiles." (*Rom. 11: 11.*) The Gentiles represent the continuation of God's history. They now bear the responsibility of obedience and are the sons of Abraham.

There is a warning hidden in this idea of the remnant. If the remnant is to be identified with the minority whom God has kept faithful, then the remnant cannot be identified with formal membership in the Christian community. When Paul spoke of the Gentile remnant, he was thinking of a small group. Now that Christianity has become a popular religion, what happens to the remnant? Paul leaves us with this problem. Must one not distinguish between those who, like the Jews, were simply traditional followers of God and that remnant whom God keeps faithful to his new demands? Christianity has and may now again become weak and corrupt. Paul would not deny this, but his faith would assure him that no matter how much the corruption, still God would leave us with a remnant who, in their faithfulness, would reveal what it is that God demands of each new generation.

UNIT III

9

PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

Read *Rom., chs. 9 to 11.*
This article is based particularly on *chs. 9: 30 to 10: 16.*

IN THIS study we shall see a very human Paul. He is troubled and bothered because many of his own people seem to have rejected the Messiah. It would have been understandable if the Gentiles had rejected him, since they had never been taught to expect his coming. But how could it be that the Jews who had looked forward to the Messiah should fail to recognize him?

[*The*] *Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; but . . . Israel who pursued the righteousness which is based on law did not succeed in fulfilling that law.* (*Ch. 9: 30-31.*)

In spite of Israel's blindness, Paul's prayer to God for Israel is "that they may be saved." This can only happen if the Jews are told the truth about Jesus. "How are they to hear without a preacher?" (*Ch. 10: 14.*) Those Gentiles who confess him must bring their message to the Jews who have not yet been able to understand. Paul does not give up hope for those who have fallen away. He shows us how the life of the church is fulfilled in its missionary preaching.

Jews and Gentiles

The Gentiles, who have received the truth of God through the Jews, must bring the truth "back home" to those to whom God first revealed himself. We must be especially careful as we try to understand Paul here, for the relation between Christianity and Judaism is a very complex one. In the first place, we must ask ourselves whether the spirit of what Paul is saying *limits* our missionary activity to the Jews. Obviously, the Jews are only one small fragment of the world that does not confess Christ. At the same time, as Paul sees it, the Jews are in a special situation. Unlike many other people in the Roman world, they did know the living God. In addition, Jesus was already known to many of them, and still they would not accept his Messiahship.

The Jews are not alone, however, in having heard of Jesus and rejecting him. We should, to be fair to what Paul is trying to say, think also of others after Paul's time who have heard of and rejected the Messiah. One can think of many illustrations in church history, but we can come closer to our own time. In our own civilization, there are men and women who once belonged to the Christian faith and who now reject the church. Each of us knows someone, perhaps in our family or among our friends, who cannot accept the Christian faith. Like Paul, we may well be troubled so that we too pray "that they may be saved." We might include a group, less easy to identify, but who belong to those who once believed and now believe no longer. These are the people who continue to go to church, but who go simply from habit. Their hearts are closed. Indeed, their hearts are elsewhere—thinking of their property or their work, but not thinking

ST. PAUL
(Florentine school; by a follower of Giotto)

about God. Religion is something they take for granted. Their lips move during the prayers, but their hearts are like ice. Such people represent the same problem as the one that confronted Paul. How is it possible for those who once believed in God to fall by the wayside? This is what Paul means by the Jews. He does not think of them as some special breed of men, but as those who once believed and now believe no longer in God's new and dynamic revelation. If we think of it in this way, then the problem of the Jews, of "those who fall by the wayside," is always among us. It will be helpful if we think of the Jews, not as though they were different from other men, but as those, like our own humanists, who have lost the vision of God's truth.

Paul, however, was troubled only about Israel, because the church was young enough so that only Israel was *then* defective. We, however, are in a different situation from Paul in our relation to Israel. Since Paul's time, great changes have taken place, which he could not possibly have foreseen. One of the more important changes is that the Jews and the Gentiles have changed places. During Paul's lifetime, the Jews were in a majority among the people who believed in the living God, and the Gentile Christians were in a minority. Today, almost all the Western world is at least *formally* Christian. Today, the followers of Judaism comprise only a slight, scattered, and *fearful* minority. It is not hard, nor is it pleasant, to understand why the Jews are fearful. Christianity has a long history of having tried to convert the Jew, not by the gospel of peace, but by the sword. During the Middle Ages the Jews were sometimes given the alternatives of believing in Christ or being burned at the stake. All of us can remember that Hitler exterminated millions of Jews; what is more important is that the Jews can also remember Hitler. Furthermore, we need not cross the ocean to find examples of Jewish persecution. Large sections of the American public are anti-Semitic. Jews are kept out of certain professions. Their numbers are frequently limited by a quota system in colleges. They are refused admission to "Gentile" resorts and hotels. They have never been given full citizenship in the American community. They have been mistreated by Christian civilizations for centuries. Their dead are beyond number; their tragic suffering is beyond *our* comprehension.

Since Paul's relationship to Israel is so different from our own, we need to be more sensitive as we try to bring "the gospel of peace." With Paul, we must insist that if Christ is God's Messiah, then obviously he must eventually be the Messiah for the Jews as well as for the Gentiles. However, since we are in a different situation and since our persecution of the Jew has created psychological problems for Israel, we need to face the problem with a different spirit. Before we can bring Christ to the Jews, we need, for decency's sake, to convince the Jews that we are aware of our sin against them. The Jews cannot trust what we say about our faith so long as they cannot trust us as persons. Therefore, before we can expect a reasonable hearing, we need to convince the Jews that Christianity has no sympathy with anti-Semitism. Perhaps before the Jews can believe our Lord, we must convince them that we have mended our "Christian" ways. This will involve more penitence and self-criticism than we have displayed. An Irish Protestant, lamenting over the barrier between the English and the Irish, once

aid that the trouble with the English was that they ouldn't remember, and the trouble with the Irish was hat they couldn't forget. In the same way, the Jews von't be able to forget until we start remembering. It ill be, God willing, possible for the Jews to see the hrist of peace behind our faith, once we have over- ome the evil that is in our hearts. We shall do this by howing that the word "Gentile" meant for Paul a on-Jewish *believer* in the Lord Jesus. It did not mean or Paul what our civilization means by the phrase Gentiles only."

he Righteousness of Men and of God

The fact that the Jews and many others have fallen way from God's grace should be a warning to all of s. Israel did not achieve a relationship to God by its wn strength. Israel was elected by God. It is God who nitiates the relationship, whether it be to the Jews or o the Gentiles. As the Jews fall, the Gentiles cannot be lled with pride. The Gentiles might profitably remem- er that as the Jews failed, so too might the Gentiles. f we should be defective in our responsibility, the eadership to which we have been called might very vell pass over to those whom we have called the hea- hen. Our relationship to God depends upon our faith- ulness to him. Paul does not believe that God takes way our freedom. Although God calls us, we can re- udiate our calling. Remembering those who have fal- en by the wayside, we can never take our faith for ranted.

The Jews fell because they sought to "establish their wn" righteousness instead of submitting "to God's ighteousness." They had insisted that the Messiah who was to come would be a Messiah of power. When he came in lowliness, their zeal for their own knowledge aused them not to recognize him.

The Christian church is also capable of substituting ts own knowledge for God's righteousness. We have ometimes insisted on certain requirements that God imself did not demand. The church has sometimes re- quired an unimaginative and literal acceptance of its loctrines. We have sometimes insisted on certain views n regard to science, such as our opposition for years o the idea of evolution. Even worse, there have been Christians who have insisted that Christianity belongs o white men. When this happens, it is because false rophets have arisen among us who substitute their iew of righteousness for what God requires. The hurch must always be on its guard lest it substitute ts own idea of the truth for the truth that God de- nands. It would be helpful if the church referred more requently to the prayer of Daniel, "To thee, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us confusion of face" (*Dan. 9: 7*). If we thought in these terms, we would peak the truth as we see it with greater humility.

he Word of Faith

Paul helps us to understand what *is* required of the Christian by telling us how we may understand. The truth is not far from us. "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart." (*Rom. 10: 8.*) The simple requirement of faith is that "if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (*v. 9*). These are the only two requirements for salvation. Paul knows nothing of the complicated additions that later Christianity has made to the faith. Here Paul brings faith down to the essentials. He knows nothing of the ideas that, in later Christianity, have been so controversial. He does not tell us that we must accept the virgin birth nor that we must recognize the sovereignty of the bishop of Rome. He does not even require that we accept certain doctrines that he himself finds to be so helpful, i.e., the doctrine of election.

At the same time, Paul is saying that being a Christian is a very heavy responsibility. When he speaks of confessing "with your lips that Jesus is Lord," he means more than simply muttering the name of Jesus. A confession is made publicly and in every area of our life. We confess and gladly admit that we believe in the Lord Jesus in our work and in our play, among our friends and among strangers. In short, we confess Jesus totally wherever we are. Paul does not allow us to have a "private" Jesus, hidden from the world.

Furthermore, there must be some relation between what our lips say and what our hearts believe. You shall "believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead." It is in the heart that one believes in the resurrection, and here is a private world into which no one else can enter. None of us can tell what is in another man's heart, and, therefore, we have not the right to

judge. In the secret place where we are all alone before God—there and there alone do we believe that "God raised him from the dead." Each of us must make this adventure quite alone. No one can go with us. We cannot lean on others. Before God we must answer, regardless of what others have thought. We must believe, not because it is fashionable or because it is easy, but because, for us, Jesus and his resurrection is the only truth that matters. In our aloneness, only faith can supply the answer God seeks. Only in our hearts can we give our lives in humble surrender to him who is the Lord.

The Gospel of Peace

What gospel is it that we confess and that we bring to those who have fallen by the wayside? It must not be our gospel, but must be truly God's gospel. Unless

we bring his gospel, the darkness will continue. "How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?" (*V. 14.*)

The gospel is carried in only one way. It never comes except through people who believe in it with their whole hearts. God has provided no other way for men to hear of him except through the lips and pens of those who love him. There are no signs from heaven, no direct communications from God except through his church. The joyful responsibility of carrying God's message falls upon those who believe him.

What shall they say? Paul says simply that we shall "preach the gospel of peace" (*v. 15,* KJV). This is the only message that we dare to bring. Whatever in us that is not of peace we cannot bring to the world. It cannot be the gospel of the sword. Nor can it be the gospel of the West or an American gospel. It must be the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we bring this gospel to the Jews, it must contain the peace of Christ and not our arrogance. Since it contains the peace of Christ, it must reflect our love and understanding. It must be free from pride, and it must be a gospel that helps us to acknowledge our sin. When *this* gospel is preached, we shall become transparent. The stains and the dirt shall be first wiped from the windows of our lives, so that men looking through *us* shall not be cut off from the vision of the risen Lord. Thus we dare to believe that because Christ is our Lord, we shall become the vessels by which his love is shared with the world.

UNIT III

10

THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

Read *Rom., chs. 12 to 14; 15: 13.*
This article is based particularly on *chs. 12: 1-8; 13: 8-10.*

In the first eleven chapters of the letter to the Romans, Paul has completed his argument for justification by faith. He believes that his readers in Rome will have been convinced that their redemption has come through the love of God. Up to now he has been emphasizing faith so strongly that it might seem to some readers that he is not interested in the way in which a man lives his daily life. However, Paul does not want to be misunderstood. How a man lives his daily life is of the greatest importance. If it is to be an honest life, it must be grounded in the truth. Now that he has shown the readers what the truth is, Paul turns to the practical implications of God's righteousness.

The Human Response to Grace

Paul thinks about man's relationship to God in this fashion: God's love is real, and it alone gives man his health, his true relation to the power that keeps his life going. The man who lives in faith knows that the love of his Heavenly Father sustains him. He does not spend his time talking about what he can do. Simply and spontaneously, he does what the Father requires of him. He does it because he has gone home, has dared to trust God, and has relied upon him.

So, Paul, when he does begin to talk about man's responsibilities, speaks very simply. He does not give a long list of principles or an elaborate code of ethics. He says, "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice." (*Rom. 12: 1.*) The ethic of the Christian life is found in the free response to the "mercies of God." God has been merciful, and our good works are in response to what he has done for us. Christians do not do good works in *response* to the good will of men. That is, we are not good because it will make others think more highly of us. Nor do we do good works because we are trying to convince ourselves of something. We are not responding to *ourselves* but to the living God. We live by faith, in the knowledge that our lives are an answer to the God whose power is present in our lives. We are responding to the "mercies of God," not only when we pray, but in every moment of our lives. Our personalities can reflect this trust even when we are not thinking about God. When we are busy in our work, when we are away from home, even when we are unconscious of our relationship, we are still living by faith and trust.

Paul beseeches us, in response to the mercies of God, "to present [our] bodies as a living sacrifice." We do not sacrifice some small part of our selves. We do not imagine that God requires a *portion* of our wealth or a few moments of our time. We present our bodies—all that we are and all that we can ever hope to be. With our eyes and our ears, we see and hear our Father's world. We have no ears for voices other than our Father's word. Evil words may be spoken, but our ears do not receive them, because faith helps us to be innocent again, simple children of our Heavenly Father.

Love Fulfills the Law

When man lives in response to "the mercies of God," he does not need to live by a complicated set of rules. All the commandments "are summed up in this sentence, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (*Rom. 13: 9.*) In these words Paul is stating the central voice of the Bible as it has been expressed, not only by Jesus (*Mark 12: 29-31*), but also by the Old Testament (*Deut. 5: 17-21*). This is no new commandment, but one that is written in the heart of God's revelation

of himself. More than this he had not asked. Man, however, is always asking more than God requires. We know (see Article 3) that Israel had added very complicated requirements to God's law. We also know that the church is always tempted to add to God's law. Paul, however, emphasizes the simple and single requirement that was the core of the teachings of Jesus—"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Paul tells his readers that they shall "owe no one anything, except to love one another." Love and love alone is what we owe one another. We are not asked merely to tolerate one another. In a certain sense, we cannot say that God requires that we even respect one another. What he requires is much more demanding than respect; it is love. We cannot stop "along the way" and believe that it is enough either to ignore or to be indifferent to our brother. We cannot use a set of laws as though fulfillment came through anything short of love. Jesus reminds us that it is not enough to refrain from committing adultery: "But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (*Matt. 5: 28*). We can never satisfy ourselves with a law that limits our obligation. We may stop only with absolute love, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (*Rom. 13: 10*).

Thus does Paul remind his readers of what it means to love "by the mercies of God." The love that God reveals in his Son opens our hearts, so that we too are free to love others as God has loved us.

God and Politics

But how, now, is this transforming love to be expressed in *Rome?*

At the time when Paul wrote the letter to the members of the church in Rome (about A.D. 58), there were peaceable relations between the Roman Government and the small Christian faith. This was so especially because Christianity was small and of no great political consequence. However, in a few years the Christian faith was to be forbidden, and in the year 64 a fire, which burned part of the city of Rome, was, by the government officials, blamed on the Christians. The peace that existed was only a temporary peace. Trouble was in the air, and feelings of discontent were circulated in the churches. The question the church had to solve was what was God's will for them as they related themselves to a pagan government. Should they support it, and, if they did, weren't they really supporting the sins of Rome? Should they ignore the government and go their own way as much as possible? This was difficult because of the problem of paying taxes. Should they become defiant and proclaim to the Roman Government that it was idolatrous and therefore condemned of God? This latter view was taken by the writer of the book of Revelation. It is such questions as these which Paul tried to answer for the Christians at Rome.

To some modern readers it will seem that Paul has mixed religion too much with politics. He seems to be using the gospel to support the Roman Government. Some would argue that Paul should be more neutral. He is anything but neutral when he says: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God" (*Rom. 13: 1*). According to Paul, no government comes into existence unless it has the support of God. Paul has considerable authority for this point of view. The men of the Old Testament had always recognized that God's power was not limited to what we ordinarily call the religious sphere. From the very beginning, it was believed that Israel became a nation and a state because God had given it the power so to do. The Israelite was incapable of thinking that God operated in a political vacuum. Furthermore, the prophets had recognized that the authority by which God governed history was not limited to a Hebrew government. Isaiah knew that little Judah could not control all the states in Palestine. He therefore accepted the principle that the

Assyrian Empire should control Palestine. Jeremiah, at a later time, faced a similar problem and decided, to the irritation of his countrymen, that the Babylonians were God's instruments in bringing order into Palestine. In effect, he said the same of the Babylonians that Paul is saying of Rome.

The Limitations in Paul's View

There are problems in Paul's view that we must consider. Fortunately, Paul would never expect us to take him literally. Let us therefore look at some of the weaknesses in his position in order to get to the truth behind it. In the first place, Paul is speaking as a human being with limited political knowledge. He doesn't distinguish between good and bad governments simply because he has known only one government (Rome) and, as governments go, that happened to be a good one. If Paul had been living in a more evil age, he might not have been so optimistic about the government's being necessarily ordained of God. If he had written perhaps twenty years later, when Rome persecuted the Christians, he might have, like the author of the book of Revelation, concluded that Rome was a symbol of pure idolatry. If Paul had lived under an impossible government like Hitler's, he might have

had to allow more room for changing the state from an evil one to a relatively good one.

We must also take into consideration the fact that Rome did govern the whole world. There were no other choices in Paul's time. In other periods of history, men have had to choose between two or more conflicting governments. If all powers are ordained of God, then this would also be true of revolutionary powers that are just coming into being. How would one choose between an old government that was dying and a new one that had not yet been born? Men had that difficult choice to make during the American Revolution. Which of the powers was ordained of God? Paul knew only one power, and that was Rome.

Paul, also, because of the special situation of Rome, seems to allow very little responsibility for the Christian to assist in the government. "Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience." (*V. 5.*) When Paul uses the word "subject," he is speaking of the kind of government that belonged to Rome. One could not use the word in a democracy where we really are not politically *subject,* since we are all politically *responsible* for the health of the state. Paul's language (although he was himself a free citizen) comes closer to serfdom than it does to a political democracy. Paul, because of his limited political experience, seems to have an undue confidence in Caesar's justice.

A Theological View of the State

However, Paul is speaking not only because of his partiality to Rome, but also out of Biblical principles. He is trying to think out the implications of the resurrection. He is impressed by the fact that the Christian lives in the age of the Spirit. God's power is now redeeming history. The one thing that Paul knows is that God, through Christ, has created a spiritual revolution that has changed the course of history. The whole mission of his life is to preach so that men *by faith* shall see the renewal that comes with God's love. The time has now come in which we acknowledge that God has done what we cannot do. This is not the time to try to redeem history ourselves. This is not the time to take a quick glimpse at God's action and then hurry off to busy ourselves with our own revolution.

Humanity now lives in the age of the Spirit. Previously (before the resurrection) men had lived in the age of sin. Then they had been busy building their kingdoms. Now, in the fullness of time, political busyness must cease. This is the time of the divine revolution. Men who are aware of God's revolution do not busy themselves, *as if nothing had really happened,* with their own political schemes. Paul, rightly, sees that all revolutions (American, French, Russian, Chinese), although sometimes necessary, are spiritually dangerous. The revolutionist comes too close to being a god. He takes power and uses it to mold the future as *he* wants it. The revolutionist sets himself apart from other weak mortals, who must put up with governments that limit them. The power of the revolutionist is so great that he has little sense of his own limitations. The man who does not know Christ can play this role more easily than the Christian. The Christian has too great a sense of sin to trust himself so completely with other people's lives.

What does the age of the Spirit demand? What is required for those who live by faith? It does not demand a great heroic act in the usual sense of the word. The logic of the age of the Spirit is quite the opposite. Those who take God's mercy seriously cannot at the same time take their own power and virtue seriously enough to impose it upon others. The age of the Spirit is not the time to do big things, to be big heroes, to make big plans. This is not the time to be big, but the time to *stop* being big—which is the very genius of the transformed life.

To the Glory of God

Here Paul envisions a transformed community and soon (*chs. 14* and *15*) deals specifically with the *church* in Rome. It is the church, yes, but it is the church in *Rome,* that is, a group of people, all of whom have names, street addresses, and bills to pay. Paul observes the stubborn persistence of sin in the church. Self-righteousness lays hold of men as they begin to think more highly of their answers than they have a right. Paul recognizes and is not disturbed by the fact that so long as there are different people in the church, there will be different points of view. Differences of opinion belong to the life of the church. God does not make us carbon copies of one another. The grace of God is important just because God makes it possible for people quite different in temperament and thought to love and respect one another. God has united us "that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*ch. 15: 6*).

The work and the labor to which we have been called by God waits. God's call does not last forever. There are hungry mouths to be fed, the sick are to be visited, and the naked are to be clothed. There are millions of men and women bound up in the sickness of their own solitude. These people who have need of God cannot wait forever while we fight among ourselves as to whether anyone has a right to eat meat or drink wine. God has not given his Son unto the death of the cross in order that we might force our brother to behave exactly as we behave. God has revealed his love for the healing of the nations. This is our task, and in it God is glorified. He who lives by faith in the risen Lord and not by faith in his own way of life understands the unity of the Christian fellowship. To us has been given the privilege of serving one another. Nothing that we think or desire for ourselves is more important than the love of Christ. Because this love is our greatest treasure, we are willing, by the grace of God, to sacrifice ourselves that it may be realized. "Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (*V. 7.*)

The Christian Round Table

UNIT I

"The Blind Hope" *By Burton H. Throckmorton, Jr.*

1: THE DOWNFALL OF THE HASMONEANS

As we observed in the last unit, John Hyrcanus, son of Simon and grandson of Mattathias, was an enormously successful ruler of the Jews. From all outward appearances, the future of Israel under the Hasmoneans was as bright during his rule as it had been under David's almost a thousand years earlier. There were no rivals for the high-priestly office; nor was there anyone in the land who seemed even remotely in a position to challenge the civil authority of John. Moreover, John had five sons, and the perpetuation of the Hasmonean dynasty seemed assured.

We also noted in the last unit that it was apparently under John Hyrcanus that the Hasidim withdrew their support from the Hasmoneans. These separated Hasidim were called Pharisees ("separated ones"). But the Jews as a whole seem to have venerated John more and more as a holy man and as a prophet.

When John died in 104 B.C., the Jews lost both their ruler (John never took the title "king") and their high priest. Not having great confidence in the governing ability of any of his five sons, he willed that his widow rule in his stead and that his eldest son, Aristobulus, be made high priest—an office which a woman could not occupy under Jewish law. Aristobulus, however, was not satisfied with his inheritance. He had his mother put in prison, where he arranged that she starve to death; and, having usurped the rule of the land, he took for himself the royal title, king. As if this were not enough, Aristobulus also had three of his brothers imprisoned and subsequently was responsible for the murder of his fourth brother. One year of such blood-curdling activity was apparently all that Aristobulus could take, and in 103 he died.

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Alexander Jannaeus

Aristobulus' childless widow, Salome Alexandra, married the oldest of her husband's three surviving brothers, Alexander Jannaeus, who succeeded his brother not only as husband, but also as high priest and king, from 103 to 76 B.C. Not to be outdone by his predecessor, Jannaeus' first act was to murder one of his two remaining brothers.

His reign seems to have been spent largely in military campaigning. At first he had to keep rebels from successful revolts. A Syrian town would declare its independence, for example, and Jannaeus would have to show it who was boss. Later, in a most unfortunate battle against the king of Arabia, Jannaeus' army was driven into a deep ravine by a bunch of camels, and Jannaeus was forced to flee for his life to Jerusalem. This humiliating episode, somewhat beneath the dignity of a combined king and high priest, became the signal for the outbreak of civil wars throughout his domain. A number of Jews (Pharisees) who by this time had become bitterly opposed to Hasmonean rule, appealed to the Syrians for help in ousting Jannaeus. In a raging battle near Shechem, Jew fought against Jew; but the Syrian troops prevailed, and Jannaeus fled to the mountains. Here many Jews, formerly hostile, joined him to keep the country from falling into Syrian hands. The Syrians then withdrew, and Jannaeus took his revenge on the Pharisees who had opposed him. He shut their leaders in prison and had hundreds of them and their families executed. The rest of his enemies fled. During the remainder of his life Jannaeus ruled without internal opposition; but time would tell that the price he had paid for internal harmony was far too high.

Before he died in 76 B.C., Jannaeus engaged in many

successful wars of conquest, so that at his death he had almost re-established the whole of the Davidic kingdom under Jewish rule. He had persuaded his wife, Salome Alexandra, to declare for the Pharisees when he should die. This she did; and when Jannaeus died, she took the rule of his kingdom into her own hands, making her eldest son, Hyrcanus II, high priest.

Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II

But Salome Alexandra had a younger son—Aristobulus II, who was energetic and ambitious and utterly displeased that he had been given no authority at the death of his father. So, when his mother died in 67 B.C., Aristobolus II met his brother, Hyrcanus II, in batttle. Aristobulus was the victor, and Hyrcanus agreed that his younger brother should rule in his place. This arrangement, however, was far too simple to last. Aristobulus' plan was not to succeed so easily. In fact, it was not to succeed at all.

An Idumean named Antipater (Antipas, for short) was not very happy with the arrangement between the brothers, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus. Antipater, expecting the rule of Israel to pass to Hyrcanus, had been busy cultivating the latter's friendship and co-operation; and he was more than a little chagrined to see Aristobulus take over. Antipater's father was military governor over all Idumea, and Antipater had no doubt succeeded to this office. Incidentally, he had four sons, the second of whom was called Herod. It was under the reign of this Herod that Jesus was to be born. But this is to get ahead.

Antipater was anxious to remove Aristobulus from the Jewish throne; and he finally persuaded Hyrcanus to flee from Jerusalem to the Arabian king Aretas, with whom an arrangement was made to attack Aristobulus. Aristobulus was defeated by Aretas' powerful army and fled to Jerusalem. Finally, in 64 B.C., deputies from the two contending parties—those supporting Aristobulus and those supporting Hyrcanus—went up with gifts to Pompey's general, Scaurus, in Damascus, and asked him for assistance. Scaurus decided for Aristobulus.

Later in the same year Pompey himself arrived in Damascus, and both sides again appealed to the Romans. This time a third party was represented—those who wanted neither Aristobulus nor Hyrcanus—no human king at all! Aristobulus and Hyrcanus each presented his case, but Pompey decided to reserve judgment until he had been in the general area for a longer time. He asked both sides to wait.

But Aristobulus did not obey Pompey. He marched on Judea, thus angering the Roman, who sent his soldiers after Aristobulus. Meanwhile Aristobulus had shut himself up in a fortress near Jerusalem. Upon being attacked by Pompey's army, he escaped to Jerusalem and prepared to stay there though Pompey's army was on its way. In 63 B.C., Pompey entered the city after a long, bloody battle. He executed the leaders of those who had stood against him and demolished the city walls. Hyrcanus was allowed to remain as high priest, but to have only nominal powers as head of state.

So in one blow were annihilated the territorial gains that had been achieved at such great expense by a long line of Maccabeans over a period of almost a century. Wars and intrigues, bloodshed and murder, the gaining and losing and regaining of the same territory—such was the high price paid in Jewish blood under Hasmonean leadership! And now everything was lost. A weak offshoot of the Hasmoneans, Hyrcanus II, was the puppet ruler of a small territory in southern Palestine. The only one who gained when Pompey entered Jerusalem was an Idumean named Antipater.

2: HEROD THE GREAT AND HIS SUCCESSORS

Roman Control

Pompey's entrance into Jerusalem in 63 B.C. just about ended the Jews' political independence. There was not again to be a really independent Jewish state until our own day—the year 1948. Pompey returned to Rome jubilant over his successes in the Near East. Governing responsibilities were left in the hands of Scaurus, who was succeeded some time later by Gabinius; and because of a few minor but nonetheless troublesome attempts of some Jews to regain authority in their land, Gabinius crushed all Jewish resistance by dividing Judea into five districts, each having a supreme tribunal. Hyrcanus II was left with only the office of high priest, all civil authority having been taken from him.

Pompey was assassinated in Egypt in 48 B.C., and Julius Caesar took over the Roman Government. Hyrcanus and Antipater, the friendly twosome, immediately gave Caesar their full support, even to the extent of sending him military assistance during a campaign in Egypt in 47. Caesar, in turn, rewarded them generously. He made Hyrcanus the hereditary high priest and ethnarch of the Jews; and he made Antipater a Roman citizen, exempt from taxes, and procurator of an enlarged Judea including Samaria and Galilee. Antipater then appointed his eldest son Phasael as prefect of Judea, and his second son Herod as prefect of Galilee. Caesar also permitted the Jews to observe their laws anywhere in the Empire, and he granted them special military exemptions because of their Sabbath law. No wonder the Jews of the world were to mourn the death of Caesar in 44!

When Caesar was assassinated, a struggle ensued between Mark Antony and Octavian on the one hand and Brutus and Cassius on the other. Cassius went to

Syria, where he demanded great sums of money. At about the same time, Antipater was poisoned by a man who hoped to usurp authority in Judea. But in 42 Mark Antony defeated Brutus and Cassius at Philippi and took command of the Near East himself. Antipater's son Herod, who had previously backed Cassius, switched his allegiance immediately to Mark Antony after the cards fell at Philippi.

But Mark Antony was not to have it any easier in Palestine than his predecessors. In 40, the Parthians, with the eagerly proffered assistance of Antigonus—the long-lost son of Aristobulus II—swept down into Galilee from northern Syria. Many Jews welcomed the invasion as a means of getting the Romans and all their financial demands off their backs. So Antigonus, having killed Phasael and Hyrcanus, became king and high priest of the Jews from 40 to 37—the last Hasmonean to exercise independent authority in Judea. Herod, forced to flee, went to Rome.

In the same year that Antigonus became king of the Jews, the Roman Senate, through the influence of Mark Antony, made Herod, the son of Antipater, king of the Jews. And so there were two kings—one in, one out. Antigonus was king *in fact;* Herod was king *by appointment*. Herod could have the kingdom if he could take it, and the Romans were willing to give him the necessary help. Thus, with the aid of Roman troops, he took all Palestine, except Jerusalem, by 38; and the following year he took the capital. Antigonus, through the suggestion of Herod and the command of Mark Antony, was executed.

It was Antigonus' great-grandfather, John Hyrcanus, who had forced the long-hated Idumeans to be circumcised and had incorporated them as a part of the Jewish state. And now, less than a century later, one of these same Idumeans, Herod, became the king of the Jews.

Who Was This Herod?

Christians know Herod as the king under whose rule Jesus was born, and as a kind of half-monster who, in order to eliminate the newborn Jesus, gave orders that all male children in Bethlehem and its environs, two years old and under, should be killed. (See *Matt. 2: 16.*) But we know a good deal more than this about King Herod, later called Herod the Great. He was, in the first place, a foreigner—an Idumean. For this reason alone he could never have been completely acceptable to the Jews as their king, even though he had strengthened his position with the people he ruled by marrying Mariamne, a Hasmonean—the granddaughter of Hyrcanus II and the great-granddaughter of Alexander Jannaeus. Partly because of this marriage, and partly because of a longing for peace after many years of intrigue and war, most of the Jews seemed willing to accept Herod as their king, though he was an Idumean and in close alliance with the authorities in Rome.

Though he was king, Herod made no attempt to be the high priest also. But because of his intense jealousy of the Hasmoneans, he gradually had murdered all the male members of that family who might claim by heredity the post of high priest. He decreed that high priests were to be selected from the house of Aaron, according to the Jewish law, and no longer from the lineage of Mattathias. Herod's insane complex with regard to the Hasmonean line also eventually led to the murder of his beautiful Hasmonean wife Mariamne (he had nine other wives) and to the strangling of the two sons he had by Mariamne.

But Herod was not *all* bad. He allowed the Jews to practice their piety in accordance with their own laws, and he made no attempt to interfere with them in religious matters. Furthermore, he is noted not only for his destruction of people (especially Hasmoneans), but also for his *con*struction of buildings and cities—though the latter hardly compensates for the former. Herod built a great amphitheater near Jerusalem; he substantially increased the fortifications around Jerusalem; he adorned, especially with a new temple, the ancient city of Samaria, which he renamed *"Sebaste"* (Greek for the Latin *Augustus*); he founded the city of Caesarea, which really became the new capital of Judea; and he rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem. He began the new Temple about 20 B.C., but it was not actually completed until A.D. 62—only eight years before it was utterly destroyed.

When Herod died in 4 B.C., it could not be said that his reign had been totally without its benefits for the Jewish people. After a great famine, Herod had remitted a third of the people's taxes. In rebuilding the Temple, he had not interfered with the services and had avoided breaking any Jewish laws. Because of his friendship with the ever-changing powers in Rome, he had been largely responsible for the acceptability of Judaism throughout the whole Empire. It cannot truthfully be said that Herod—a passionate, jealous, disturbed, and ambitious man—was totally bad.

The Heirs of Herod the Great

Herod's will decreed that his kingdom be divided into three parts, among three of his still-living sons. Archelaus, his son by Malthace, was to be king of Judea. Herod Antipas, another son by the same wife, was to be tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (across the Jordan). And Philip, a son by Cleopatra (not the Egyptian queen) was to be tetrarch of the large territory north and east of the Sea of Galilee. The emperor Augustus ratified Herod's will, but he decreed that Archelaus should have the title "ethnarch" until he should prove worthy of the title "king." (This, incidentally, he never did.)

Philip established his capital at Caesarea Philippi. When he died in A.D. 34, his territory was incorporated into the Roman province of Syria; but in 37 it was given by the emperor Caligula to Herod Agrippa I, who was the grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne. Agrippa was also given the royal title "king."

Herod Antipas was the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. He ruled this territory during Jesus' entire ministry; and the Herod mentioned in the Gospels is always this Herod Antipas, except in *Luke 1: 5* and *Matt., ch. 2,* where the reference is to Herod the Great, who was king when Jesus was born. Outside the Gospels, the New Testament mentions Herod Antipas only once, in *Acts 4: 27.* It was Antipas who had John the Baptist beheaded and with whom Jesus had to deal in Galilee. Antipas, jealous of Agrippa I, the son of his half-brother, for having received the royal title, went to Rome to obtain the title of "king" also for himself. But while in Rome he was accused of sedition (wrongly, no doubt), and, instead of being made a king, was exiled. That year, 39, his territory was added to that of Agrippa I.

The third son of Herod to receive a part of his kingdom in 4 B.C. was Archelaus, who was made ethnarch of Judea (in which Jerusalem was located), Samaria to the north, and Idumea to the south. Archelaus was a despot of the worst variety and was exiled in A.D. 6. At that time his territory became a Roman province, ruled by a procurator who was directly responsible to the emperor. There were seven procurators of this province between the years 6 and 41, the fifth of whom was Pontius Pilate, procurator from 26 to 36—the years of Jesus' ministry and death. In 41 the province was also added to the territory of King Herod Agrippa I.

Thus in 41 Agrippa was king of virtually the whole territory once ruled by his grandfather, Herod the Great. It is Herod Agrippa I who is the "Herod" referred to in *Acts, ch. 12*—the only place in the New Testament where he is mentioned. But Agrippa died suddenly in 44, and the emperor reorganized the whole Palestinian kingdom into a Roman province. This territory was governed by seven procurators in turn from 44 to 66. After twenty-two years the Jews had had more cruelty from them than they could stand, and the catastrophic war of the Jews against the Romans ensued, 66–70.

3: THE JEWISH WAR OF A.D. 66–70

The Procurators

When Agrippa I died in A.D. 44, his son and successor, Herod Agrippa II, was only seventeen years old—too young to assume his father's rule. So his kingdom was governed by a succession of procurators. But in 50 Agrippa II was made king of a small northern territory (Chalcis), and by 54 he ruled a kingdom of considerable size, though far smaller than that of his father. He remained king until his death in 100, when the emperor Trajan incorporated his kingdom into the province of Syria. It is Herod Agrippa II who is the "King Herod" of *Acts, chs. 25; 26.*

The procurators who began governing Palestine in 44 were never able to reconcile the Jews to being subject to the Romans. The fourth procurator in the line was Felix (see *Acts, chs. 23; 24*), under whom tension between Jew and Roman increased. Felix took drastic measures against the most actively rebellious party among the Jews—those who, at the beginning of the war in 66, were to be called "Zealots." This party was made up of extremely fervent nationalists, who were eagerly desirous of overthrowing the Roman yoke. The zeal of these patriots cannot, however, be divorced from their religious faith. To be a "nationalist" was, from their point of view, to be a true son of the covenant. These "Zealots" were the true heirs of the Maccabean spirit. Like Mattathias and Judas Maccabeus before them, they would not suffer pagan oppression. The Maccabean rebels were their glorious exemplars, and they would do no less for God than their illustrious predecessors. One cannot understand the spirit and drive of Jewish nationalism except in terms of the Maccabean revolt on which it was patterned.

Under the stern and often drastic measures taken by Felix to squelch Jewish nationalism, the numbers of zealous patriots were increased, and they began to form a party bent on disrupting Roman rule by terrorism, plunder, and assassination.

Felix was succeeded by the procurator Festus (60–62), who sent Paul to Rome for trial (*Acts, chs. 24 to 26*). At his death Festus was followed in office by Albinus, who was soon recalled (in 64) and replaced by Gessius Florus (64–66).

Florus was the last of the procurators. He was a cruel, dishonest rogue who entered into "deals" even with thieves. Robbery was quite permissible in the land if the procurator got his share of what was stolen. And so it appeared to the Jews that, rather than be destroyed bit by bit under the procurators, it would be better to be destroyed by one blow. So wrote a Jewish priest in office under Florus.

The War

In 66 a number of Jews of Zealot inclination openly rebelled against Rome. The main leaders of the Jews tried to prevent continuation of the revolt, but riots broke out in Jerusalem and other cities, and the Zealot leaders quickly took over command. They captured Herod's palace and the tower Antonia, butchering any Roman soldiers who capitulated.

In October of 66 the Syrian legate began a siege on Jerusalem; but he had underestimated his enemy and was forced to turn back, leaving his fighting equipment behind. The rout of Syrian forces united many Jews in the belief that, like the Maccabeans before them, they would be able to overthrow the heathen tyrant. This war, from the point of view of its Jewish leaders, was

a *holy war*—a second phase, so to speak, of the war against paganism in Palestine that had been begun by the Maccabeans two centuries earlier. The land of Palestine had been given to the Jews by God, and God himself dwelt in the Temple at Jerusalem. To wield the sword against the heathen in the land was interpreted as a holy act; the strength with which to wield it was given by God. To fight *against* the Romans was to fight *for* God, and God would not allow his holy ones to be defeated. He would send his holy angels; and as the Maccabeans had prevailed, by the power of God, against the incalculable forces of the Greeks, so would the Jews now prevail, by the same power, over the overwhelming strength of the Romans. Those who revolted against the Romans had the victory of the Maccabeans always before their eyes. They did not doubt that God would accomplish again through his servants what he had accomplished before. Death and bloodshed there would surely be, and corpses of martyrs would be strewn throughout the land; but just as surely, in the end, there would be victory. We cannot understand what may appear to us as insane fanaticism on the part of many Jews during their horrible war against Rome unless we also understand their thinking and feeling and faith from the point of view here described.

After the rout of the Syrian forces, which many Jews took as the sign of their ultimate victory, Joseph, the son of Gorion, and Ananus the high priest took charge of the defense of Jerusalem against the Romans. And Nero appointed Vespasian, his most experienced military leader, to crush out the Jewish revolt. In 67, with about 60,000 men, Vespasian took Galilee and forced its chief defenders, John of Gischala and his band of Zealots, to flee to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem now became the scene of a bloody war, the outcome of which was to determine who would be the leader of the city's defenders. From a distance Vespasian watched the battle of Jew against Jew, hoping that the Jewish leaders would thereby save him the trouble of having to conquer them himself. John of Gischala was the victor, and he immediately gave orders that the former leaders of Jerusalem's defense should be executed, while he took command.

Vespasian, leaving the Jews in Jerusalem to destroy themselves without any outside interference, turned his attention to Perea, across the Jordan, and to Idumea and Samaria. By 68 he had overcome almost all the organized resistance in the land, outside the city of Jerusalem. That same year the emperor Nero died. By June of 69 Vespasian was master of the whole of Palestine, with the exception of Jerusalem and three other fortified cities. Meanwhile, one Simon Bar-Giora, who had become master in Idumea, had reached Jerusalem. He was welcomed by the enemies of John of Gischala, and once again the defense of the city was directed by two mutually hostile tyrants. It may have been at this time, in the summer of 69, that the Christian community in Jerusalem fled across the Jordan and up to Pella. In December of 69, when he heard of the murder of Vitellius, the third emperor since Nero's death, Vespasian, having been proclaimed emperor by his troops, went to Rome, arriving in the summer of 70.

The Siege of Jerusalem

Vespasian put his son Titus in charge of his legions in Judea. Titus arrived at the outskirts of Jerusalem in April of 70 and began his attack on the capital city. Thousands of Jews inside the city walls were ready to defend the holy city at any price, especially the Temple wherein God dwelt. Food soon gave out, and before long fights ensued wherever any food might be found—friend struggling against friend, loved one against loved one. Many died of starvation; and even corpses were searched for food because of the suspicion that it was being hidden somewhere within the clothes and that death was only being feigned.

In about August of 70 the gates leading into the Temple area were burned, and the following day the battle raged within the Temple courts. One of the soldiers set fire to a golden window through which there was a passage to rooms surrounding the sanctuary. Rumor spread fast throughout the city that the Temple was aflame, the Temple that it was the Jews' primary purpose to defend. The Jews fought hand to hand against thousands of Roman troops—in the narrow streets, on the roof tops, in the outer courts of the Temple. As the news spread that the Temple was in peril, the Jews fought everywhere in the city. Old men and children, robbers and priests—the Romans slew them all. No distinctions were made. The flames spread and roared and consumed the groans of dying men. Nothing could be saved; everything was burned—the entire riches of the Jews.

And so the mad, fantastic resistance ended. At the burning of the Temple it was assumed that God had fled. If God had abandoned his holy place, then the Jews must abandon it too. They must go where he had gone. There was no need to take to the fortresses and make a last-ditch stand in Jerusalem—not if God was no longer there. But where had he gone? He had left for the wilderness, the place where long ago he had found his people. God had abandoned his Temple, but he had not forsaken his elect ones. And so, many Jews who were still living pleaded with Titus to allow them to escape through the Roman lines so that they could flee to the wilderness and there prepare for the coming of the Lord of Hosts. But Titus refused to comply. He had had to deal with these Jews once, and he did not intend to deal with them again.

But if God had left the city, and if his holy angels had not come (as they had not), the Jews would *force* their way out. And so with a fury to match their attempts at defense, they headed into the Roman legions, who stamped them out like flies. When the last towers of the city were taken, the Romans could hardly believe their eyes. No one stood to oppose them; any Jews wandering in the streets were slain without mercy. In the houses, whole families were found lying dead, the

bedrooms full of corpses of those who had perished of famine. The streets were piled with dead bodies; the whole city ran with blood. Wherever a building was standing it was set on fire, and at evening the flames prevailed over the darkness. When morning dawned, all Jerusalem was still burning. Only three towers of Herod's palace still stood in a city utterly destroyed.

The End of Everything

The holy war was over, but God had not come. No doubt those Jews who had escaped were asking themselves whether the war had really been a *holy* war. The end was a horror beyond description, and yet this war was not the *last* attempt of the Jews to free themselves from foreign rule.

In 115–116 the Jews rebelled in Egypt and Cyrene, and thousands of them were killed. But a more serious revolt occurred in Palestine, under the leadership of Bar Cocheba, in 132–135. These rebels too were massacred by the Romans, who then took rigorous steps to end the possibility of any future revolts on the part of the Jews. Jerusalem was made a Roman colony called "Aelia"; a temple to Jupiter was erected on the site of the Jewish Temple that had been selected by David a thousand years before; and no Jew was permitted to enter the city of Aelia, under penalty of death. Even in the fourth century, Jews were allowed to enter the city only once a year—to weep on the site of the ancient Temple, on the anniversary of the city's destruction by Nebuchadnezzar.

The defeat of Bar Cocheba marked the end of the Zealots among the Jews, and of everything they stood for. Since 70 there has not again been a Temple in Jerusalem, nor a sacrifice made by a Jew. Judaism became a religion of the law, and the Jews a homeless people in foreign lands.

4: CALLS TO HOPE

Jesus was born among a people whose existence, for generation after generation, had been dominated by strife and oppression, poverty, rebellion, and war. He was born in a ravaged land, in the midst of a ravaged but indomitable people. The Jews, for reasons the Gentiles could never understand, could not be annihilated. There were only a few of them in the world, relatively speaking, and most of them—at least, most of the rebellious ones—lived on a small plot of land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. But they could not be overcome or assimilated. Raising their swords against Greeks and then against Romans, they were beaten down, only to rise again. Moabites and Ammonites could be wiped off the face of the earth. Why not the Jews? The *whole* answer to this question is not given to mortal man to know, but *part* of the answer is. The Jews lived and acted on the faith that they were in covenant relation with the God who is creator of all that is, ruler of all that happens.

When the Jews had been utterly defeated by the Babylonians and dispersed from their homeland, pushed down to the dust and humiliated before the nations, a prophet was raised up from among them who exclaimed boldly, despite all the historical facts:

"Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
and are accounted as the dust on the scales . . . .
All the nations are as nothing before him.

Behold, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him . . . .
He will feed his flock like a shepherd,
he will gather the lambs in his arms."

(*Isa. 40: 15, 17, 10-11.*)

How could a defeated, scattered people be so audacious as to believe such words? But they did! And not long after that they were back in Jerusalem, rebuilding among the ruins.

Prophecy Becomes "Revelation"

In the crises of Israel's history, again and again God had raised up a prophet—one who could interpret to Israel, from a perspective above and beyond his contemporary historical emergency, what God was doing and what he was about to accomplish. But after the exile, prophecy took a different form. The emphasis of the pre-exilic prophets had been on the necessity for moral reform, for obedience to the commands of God. After the exile, however, Israel was not an independent nation, but a people ruled and dominated by Gentiles, and oppression, under the Seleucids, became more than Israel could bear. Under these circumstances, prophecy became "revelation," disclosing the immediate future.

This postexilic type of prophecy is known by the name of "apocalypse." "Apocalypse" (derived from Greek) means "revelation" (derived from Latin). But the word has taken on a technical meaning, referring to a special type of literary work with its own distinctive characteristics. Apocalypses were produced in times of crisis. They were bold affirmations of faith emerging out of historical circumstances that, in themselves, offered grounds only for despair. They bade men hope when hope seemed foolhardy, believe when all visible odds were against them. Apocalypses represent an invincible faith in the face of overpowering odds, the ground of which faith is the steadfast mercy of an all-powerful God.

The Jews produced a number of apocalypses between the times of Mattathias (168 B.C.) and Bar Cocheba (A.D. 135)—a period of about three hundred years. In the second century B.C., when the Seleu-

cid king, Antiochus Epiphanes, was trying to eradicate Judaism, a Jew whose name and identity have remained unknown wrote an apocalypse that so stirred his people with faith and hope and boldness of action against the pagan tyrant that the Jews were later led to include it among their sacred Scriptures as the only apocalyptic book in their canon. This apocalypse is known to us as The Book of Daniel.

Like most apocalypses, Daniel is written under a pseudonym, being represented as a prophecy made by one of the great heroes of Israel's past. The author's technique was as follows: He placed himself back in an earlier period of Jewish history and, from that point, proceeded, ostensibly, to predict the history that would occur down to the time at which he was actually writing. But his history did not stop with his own time. The author traced this history, past his time, into the immediate future, when he believed that Israel's last oppressor would be put down, that the Jews would be delivered and would enter into everlasting life in which their martyrs would also participate. The reader of the apocalypse, amazed by the accuracy of the prediction down to his own time, would be led to assume that the prediction of the future was equally accurate. Believing, on the basis of the apocalypse, that victory *must* be imminent, the reader would throw his life into the battle. And he need not worry about his life, for did not the apocalypse say that the righteous would awake and would shine like the brightness of the firmament?

A Summons to Courage

We cannot now take the time to study The Book of Daniel in detail, but let us simply note its account of the history we have been viewing. Daniel has a vision of four great beasts coming out of the sea: they represent Babylonia, Media, Persia, and Greece (*Dan., ch. 7*). The "little horn" (*ch. 8: 9;* also in *ch. 7: 8*) is Antiochus Epiphanes, who is said to overthrow the sanctuary and crush truth to the ground (*ch. 8: 11-12*). The temple is "made desolate" (*v. 13*) in 168 B.C.; but it is "restored" (*v. 14*) by Judas Maccabeus in 165. Antiochus Epiphanes is later described as a "contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given" (*ch. 11: 21*) but whose "heart [is] set against the holy covenant" (*v. 28*). He sets up the "abomination that makes desolate"—the pagan altar inside the Temple which, precluding the Jews' worshiping there, makes the Temple desolate (*v. 31*). "But the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action." (*V. 32.*) These are the Hasidim, the holy ones. Under the leadership first of Mattathias and then of Judas Maccabeus, they take up arms against the pagan despot.

Then the angel Michael shall arise, and after a time of trouble such as the world has never known before, the people of Israel shall be delivered, and the martyrs who have gone down in the Maccabean rebellion will awake from sleep "to everlasting life" (*ch. 12: 1-3*).

Daniel was written about 164 B.C. We know this because the author is right about Judas Maccabeus and about the rededication of the Temple; but he does not know where Antiochus Epiphanes died (he died in Persia, but see *Dan. 11: 45*), and he is mistaken about the final deliverance of the Jews following the rededication of the Temple. The author of Daniel saw in the victories of Judas Maccabeus a sign that God was about to put an end to the last of the pagan tyrannies. He believed that in his own day the final victory would be won and the Messianic Kingdom established. History, as men knew it, had run its course, and God was about to take up his great power and reign.

We cannot know, we can only imagine, what hope and courage and strength were derived from this apocalypse by Jews who were fighting against odds greater even than they knew. Daniel, like other apocalypses, was a summons to courage at a time when no light shone. Like other apocalypses, it bade him who read it take whatever action still remained to him, no matter how remote the possibility of success. For the writer of Daniel, the future would not be determined by the visible forces of history. The relative power of Seleucid and Jew was irrelevant to the outcome of the battle between them. It was God, and only God, who would decide the issue. Prudence was the mark of a fool, faith the sign of true wisdom.

Judaism Rejects Apocalypse

History did not validate the faith of Daniel. Judas Maccabeus, as we have seen, marked only the begin-

OVERSEAS EXCHANGE TOUR

Shortly after July 15, a group of about twenty-five single young adults and several Presbyterian leaders in young adult work will leave New York City for a month-long tour of Presbyterian church life in the British Isles. Plans are to spend a week each in Ireland and Scotland and two weeks in England. It is possible that the group may also accompany a British party to the world-famous *Kirchentag* in Germany during the first week of August.

Young adults taking this tour will see local churches in action, mix with young adults of the British Isles, and see places of historic interest. For instance, in Ireland the headquarters will be in Belfast, and there will be side visits to Dublin, the Giant's Causeway, the Mourne Mountains, and perhaps County Donegal. The group will join Irish local church young adults for social evenings and will visit holiday centers for younger adults at Castlerock.

Each person must meet his own expenses for the tour, but these are being kept as low as possible. Before deciding that you *cannot* afford to go, write for full information to Rev. Kyoji Buma, Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y.

ning of a long struggle in which there would be intermittent successes, but whose end—politically speaking—would be a disaster. Other apocalypses were to be written at subsequent times of crisis, and apocalyptic literature was to have a marked effect on the faith and piety of many Jews. But the time came when this literature, and the faith it represented, was almost totally rejected in Judaism. After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of its Temple in A.D. 70, followed by the calamitous revolt led by Bar Cocheba in 132–135, the rabbis wanted nothing more to do with writings that incited rebellion. Faith in a supernatural intervention that would free the Jews and destroy their enemies was discouraged. The Jews no longer expected or looked for an imminent Messianic Kingdom. Too many times they had acted on the faith that they were engaged in their last battle, which, because of the coming of supernatural power, they would win. But always they had gone down to defeat, each loss greater than that which had preceded it.

After 135 the Jews were forced to rethink and reinterpret God's will for them. The rabbis, who were their leaders, were of one mind on this point: namely, that apocalyptic literature shed only a false light on Israel's understanding of her mission in the world. Hence the Jewish canon, which was pretty well set at about A.D. 90, excluded practically all apocalypses. Furthermore, Judaism, under the influence of the rabbis, rejected the elements of faith that had predominated in apocalyptic literature. It was the Christians who perpetuated the Jewish apocalypses and who appropriated many aspects of the faith they represented. New Testament writings have been greatly influenced by Jewish apocalyptic thought, but of this influence we cannot speak now. It must be investigated in connection with study of the New Testament.

5: PHARISAIC WRITINGS

We have noted that apocalypses, responding particular aspects of Jewish faith, were one type of literature that appeared during the couple of centuries before and after the birth of Christ. These writings are highly symbolic and speculative. They emphasize the power, majesty, and transcendence of God. They describe visions of heaven and hell, of judgment and the life to come. They represent an invincible faith in the ultimate victory of God over all the forces aligned against him. But apocalypses were not popular with the rabbis. They did not represent the Pharisaic point of view that was to predominate in Judaism.

The Apocrypha

The period that produced the apocalypses also produced writings of a very different character. These writings reflected the kind of faith and piety that characterized Pharisaism and that later issued in rabbinic Judaism. Two of the best examples of this literature are Tobit and Judith, both found in the Apocrypha, the name generally given to a collection of fourteen Jewish books written between about 250 B.C. and somewhere in the early Christian centuries.

Tobit was written around 190–170 B.C. The hero is a pious Jew who represents the piety later to predominate in Pharisaism. Prayer and almsgiving, two of the three so-called "pillars of Judaism," are emphasized. The third "pillar," fasting, is not yet so important, although it is mentioned. Ceremonial purity is also stressed.

Judith, written about 150 B.C., is one of the world's great short stories. Judith, the heroine (her name means "a Jewess"), represents the pious Jew. Her life reflects the same Jewish piety that issued finally in a separate party within Judaism—Pharisaism. She also represents the *active* faith shared by the Maccabeans and later by the Zealots. Throughout the story, the author describes the combination of faith and piety that he believes must be characteristic of any true Jew. Judith practices her piety regularly and under all circumstances. She does not put God to the test, but puts all her trust in him. At the right time, having kept all the ritual laws to which she was obligated, Judith acts boldly in the name of God. And God delivers his people through her. The story of Judith was undoubtedly written to give courage and zeal to the Maccabeans.

We have said that the author emphasizes Judith's faithfulness in keeping the law. Her victory in action cannot be separated from her piety. We note particularly that Judith kept the Jewish food laws even in an enemy camp. She fasted almost every day, whereas the Old Testament required fasting only once a year, on the Day of Atonement. And Judith kept the feasts of the Sabbath and the new moon. Like later Pharisees and Essenes, she was very careful about all the details of the law, even under the most difficult circumstances.

Judith is portrayed as the ideal Jew, as the pattern on which every son of Israel should model his life. In addition to her faith and piety, Judith was a widow who remained faithful to her husband, although she was a woman of unusual beauty and considerable wealth. What more can be added?

Judith and Tobit are remarkable short stories; but neither is widely known by Protestants because they are both found in the Apocrypha. (We are referring to the Old Testament Apocrypha. There is also a New Testament Apocrypha, in which the writings come from a later period.) The term "apocrypha" refers to books found in the Greek translation of the Old Testament (called the Septuagint), but *not* found in the Hebrew Old Testament. Because the early Christians

read the Old Testament in the Greek translation (that is, they read the Septuagint and not the Hebrew Old Testament), their Bible also included these "apocryphal" books, scattered among the other Old Testament writings. Books like Judith and Tobit had no special designation in the earliest years of the church, but were simply regarded as Scripture along with the rest of the Old Testament.

Different Evaluations

By the fourth century, the church in the East, noticing that its Old Testament included books not in the Hebrew canon, decided that it would no longer regard these books as Scripture. In the Western church, however, where there was less contact with Jews and thus fewer people who knew Hebrew, *all* the books of the Greek Old Testament continued, almost without interruption, to be read as Scripture. No distinction was made between the "apocryphal" books and other Old Testament books.

At the time of the Reformation, however, the attitude of the Western church toward apocryphal books changed. Martin Luther followed the Hebrew canon rather than the Greek. He isolated the apocryphal books in his translation of the Bible, published in 1534, appending them at the end of the Old Testament. He explained in his preface to this section, "The books of the Apocrypha are not to be regarded as Holy Scripture, yet they are useful and good to be read." Thus Luther emphasized a distinction between his edition of the Bible and that edition read in the whole of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic Church responded to Luther's action at the Council of Trent in 1546 by declaring all books of the Apocrypha to be canonical, except I and II Esdras and the Prayer of Manasses which, in the official edition of the Vulgate (1592), were appended to the New Testament, showing that they might be read for edification. The Vatican Council of 1870 officially confirmed the decree of the Council of Trent, which is still binding on the Roman Catholic Church, accounting for the difference in the canon that exists between Roman Catholics and Protestants.

The Westminster Confession of 1647 says of the Apocrypha that it is not "to be otherwise approved, or made use of, than other writings." The position of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as stated in Article VI of the Articles of Religion, is that "the other books . . . [viz., the Apocrypha] the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners: but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine."

So the situation with regard to the use of the Apocrypha is this: the Roman Catholic Church continues to read it as Scripture, the Eastern Orthodox Church reads some of the apocryphal books as Scripture, but Protestant Bibles have not usually contained the apocryphal books at all. Recently, however, the Apocrypha has been made easily accessible to Protestants. The committee responsible for the Revised Standard Version of the Bible has also translated the Apocrypha.

6: "THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND!"

Let us look now at some other elements that make up the background against which Jesus' life—his words and deeds—must be interpreted. We cannot come even close to understanding the historical person, Jesus of Nazareth, if we view him against a quiet pastoral background—a lake, green grass, pink and yellow flowers, and billowy white clouds passing slowly overhead. This is Jesus' environment as it was described to many of us in the primary department of "Sunday school," and some of us have never outgrown this picture. We still imagine Jesus in the forefront of the same quiet scene—perhaps with some young children also present, on their best behavior. And Jesus stands with long white robe and strong Aryan face, the alone with the Alone, contemplating the beauty of the created world.

Well, this picture just can't be defended as representing anything other than someone's untutored imagination. It certainly doesn't correspond to first-century Palestine. Let us note a few of the relevant facts. In the first place, Palestine was a small country, covering an area of about 10,150 square miles (slightly larger than New Hampshire), many parts of which were uninhabitable. It has been estimated that in the first century the population of Palestine was about three and a half million. Some comparative figures will help us to understand the significance of Palestine's population. According to the 1950 census, New Hampshire's population was about 533,000! We are told that in the year 1630 England (which is about five times the size of Palestine) had a population of 5,500,000, which is about one million for an area the size of Palestine. And England was overcrowded! After the growth of trade and industry, England could, of course, absorb a far greater population; but Palestine was a *rural* country, terribly overpopulated—hence, also, poverty-stricken.

But this is not the whole picture. The taxes exacted from the Jews, already poor, were enormous. The Jews paid two sets of taxes—the civil tax and the Temple tax. Various religious taxes had been collected at different times in Israel's history and were originally alternative taxes. These were *all* thought to be binding in the first century when the whole Old Testament was law. The result was that the total taxes paid by all Jews (not graded in accordance with income) was probably about 40 per cent of their income. In Jesus' time, then, Palestine was not only an occupied country;

it was also seething with swarms of impoverished, overtaxed Jews.

The Zealots

With Roman boots stalking the city streets, with too little food to eat and too many people to feed, it is not surprising that there should have been some Jews dedicated to the single purpose of getting the Romans out. Such a venture, if it had succeeded, would not have solved the population or economic problems, but it would at least have restored some degree of self-respect. We find, then, among the Jews of Jesus' day, a party called "Zealots," whose smallness in number was no indication of its effectiveness.

The Zealots combined zeal for the law (their spiritual forebears were the Maccabeans) with a deeply held conviction that the land of Palestine, given to the Jews by God, belonged to the Jews and to no others. The source of Jewish nationalism in Israel's history was repeatedly the farming population of the rural areas. Jewish resistance, both to Seleucid domination and to Roman rule, cannot be divorced from the confidence of the Jews that God would give them political sovereignty over the land he had promised them. Moses had stated it quite plainly: "You shall rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over you" (*Deut. 15: 6*).

The Maccabeans had believed this so firmly that they had been willing to risk their lives, and the lives of their families, against overwhelming odds to gain their religious and political independence. In Jesus' day the Zealots represented the same point of view—the oppressor now being the Romans instead of the Seleucids.

The Zealots wanted to overthrow the Romans and all collaborationists within Israel—tax collectors, Sadducees, and high-priestly families. They saw no reason to postpone or delay what they believed to be the only action God would commend: seizure of the land and restoration of political and religious freedom.

The Zealots differed from some other groups of Jews only in the matter of timing. Many Jews believed that the Romans must be overthrown. The question was, When? Some apocalyptists said that God would give a sign when the time had come for the Jews to act. The Zealots' point of view was that no sign would be given, that the time was *now*. If one were not a Zealot, however, it did not follow that he was a collaborationist. And when the war finally did break out in 66, all faithful Jews were caught up in a life-and-death struggle of God's people against their common enemy. Like many other Jews, the Zealots believed that when the holy war came, God would send supernatural forces to bring them to victory. But the Zealots did not want to wait for a sign that such forces were on their way. They were sure that if they acted, God also would act. He would surely not go back on his promise. *This* war God could not lose!

The Qumrân Community

Another group of Jews about whom we now know a good deal, whose life and faith also shed light on the Judaism of Jesus' time, is the community that lived at Qumrân. Scrolls left by this community—the "Dead Sea scrolls"—have recently been found in the area, overlooking the north end of the Dead Sea, where this sect lived. (See the July-September, 1959, issue of CROSSROADS, pages 69-75.)

The historical and religious origins of the Qumrân community are traceable to the time of the Jewish revolt against the Hellenizing policies of the Seleucids. But this particular sect probably broke with the Hasmoneans in the days of Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 B.C.) and established its own tightly knit community at Qumrân. The group was connected in some way with the Essenes, a Jewish group not mentioned in the New Testament but known from other writings.

Like the Pharisees (only more so), the members of the sect at Qumrân believed that they must maintain strictly the ritual purity demanded in the Old Testament. They viewed themselves as the remnant of Israel, as the only Jews in Israel who were faithful in all respects to the law delivered to them by God. They isolated themselves, not simply from the Gentiles, but also from their fellow Jews, and settled in the wilderness of Judea. There they set up strict rules governing their ritual purity.

Among the scrolls found near the Qumrân buildings are fragments from the so-called Battle Manual, entitled "The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness." It is to be assumed that this manual reflects the point of view of many members, if not all, of the community that preserved it—if, in fact, the community did not actually produce it. The manual speaks of a war before God in which the sons of darkness will be destroyed. In one place it is written, "Thou wilt not turn back until wickedness is annihilated."

The sect at Qumrân expected a great and final war of the sons of light against the sons of darkness. God would come and slay the sons of darkness. He would not abandon Israel. In this regard the Battle Manual represents the faith held also by the Zealots, who were contemporaries of the Qumrân group, and both groups were spiritual descendants of the Maccabeans. But the Zealots, as we have seen, wanted to *initiate* the war, whereas the sect by the Dead Sea was living in ritual

purity until the war should begin. Furthermore, since the Jews at Qumrân looked on themselves as the only faithful Jews in Israel, they thus constituted an entirely separate and distinct sect.

The war came in A.D. 66—the "holy" war, in which the Jews expected that many would die, but which they believed could not be lost. For this was not simply Israel's war; it was *God's* war, in which he would make good his promise to his chosen ones. In June, 68, the Roman general Vespasian, later to become emperor, marched from Caesarea on the coast to Jericho and the Dead Sea. The "sons of light" must have stood waiting for the approaching "sons of darkness." Surely God would send his legions of angels! We can only imagine with what fury the men at Qumrân wielded the sword in behalf of none other than the Lord of hosts. We can only imagine, because there are no records.

When the Dead Sea scrolls were found in 1947, new light began to be cast on the hopes and expectations, on the piety, the spirit, and the ethos that dominated the lives of the first-century Jews in Palestine. Even the members of the semiascetic, isolated sect that dwelt in the desert of Judea lived in anticipation of a final showdown between the holy people of God and the unclean heathen of the world. Peace was not a historical reality in the Palestine of Jesus' day; it was a hoped-for blessing. Everywhere in Palestine there was suspicion and hatred, hunger and poverty, restlessness, resentment, and hearts that yearned for freedom and for peace. Into these conditions Jesus was born; under these circumstances the angels announced, "Peace on earth!" It is against this background that all Jesus' words are to be understood, that his life and crucifixion must be interpreted.

UNIT II

How to Watch Television and Movies

By John K. Mitchell and John R. Fry

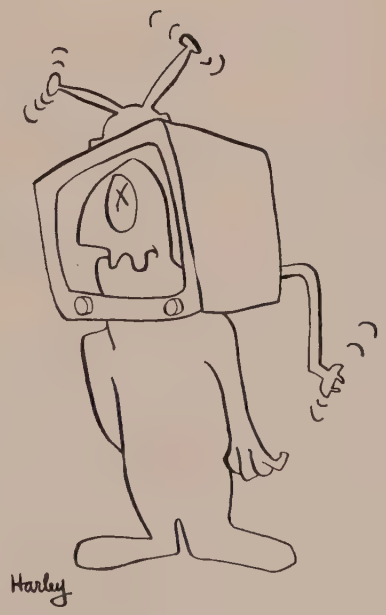
1: THE PEN IS MIGHTIER

Is there some problem involved in watching television? For most people it is the simplest of exercises—or cessation of exercise. All one does is turn on the set, stretch out on a davenport or easy chair in a semidark room, loosen shoes, tie, and belt, and, if not stimulated, terrified, or convulsed with laughter, sink gently into slumber. It goes on all over America every evening.

The Glass Teacher

And there is the problem. The mind of man does not grow unless it is exercised. Television programing, most of which is visceral rather than cerebral, is rapidly reducing us to a race of "vidiots." A recent survey conducted by one of our large universities estimated that forty-nine out of every hundred adults in America did not read a book in the previous year. This does not refer to books like *War and Peace* or *Dr. Zhivago*. This means *any* book: *Peter Rabbit* or *The Bedside Mad*. It is hard to concentrate on a good book when the lights are low and you have to shift position every few minutes to relieve your saddle sores. Besides, the staccato of pistol shots provides more emphatic punctuation than an author's periods and commas. So the mind gets no exercise.

But television is here to stay. The skyline of America has been radically altered since its advent, with bent-



THE VIDIOT

pipe aerials dominating every town and city. Its influence is everywhere. There are now more television sets in America than there are bathtubs, and certainly more hours are spent before the one than in the other. It is highly probable that, even in our talkative culture, the art of conversation is suffering from too much preoccupation with trite drama steeped in fluorescence.

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Parents and children used to talk together about many matters and even carry on interesting projects together, learning new things and winning a mutual respect that bound them closer to each other. "Spectatoritis" can be a deadly inflammation that leaves both emotions and ideas expended but unexpressed.

Here is one side of the problem. But we don't sense its full import until we see the potential for good that is ever present, but seldom realized. The wide spread of television's influence is the greatest key to the power it might wield. In a single half hour, more people have watched contestants act their way through the solemn fraud of a quiz show than saw and heard the apostle Paul in all his journeying lifetime. Though the miracles of electronics may be taken for granted in most of our homes, and though these miracles seem less awesome than lunar rockets, their potential import for the instruction, motivation, and direction of human beings is greater than that of any other scientific development. Domestic and international policies reflect an awareness of the power of direct face-to-face communication through mass media. Many educators suspect that the high incidence of violence in television programing is related by more than coincidence to the rapid increase in juvenile crime.

"Without Benefit of Clergy"

Yet, in spite of the acknowledged power of direct visual communication through television and movies, very little knowledge about the actual effects of these media has been established. Market-research projects of the advertising industry have told us much about methods for selling cosmetics and cigarettes through visual communication; but what studies exist to tell us how to stimulate intellectual acuity and social responsibility? Of course, the obvious reason is that there is no direct profit in selling these; there's not even a tax deduction available. Television time and program production are expensive, and sponsors want their money's worth. Most of us who are not connected with the industry have difficulty grasping the cost involved. Certainly this has been true of the Protestant Church. For instance, how much money do you suppose is given annually by all the various co-operating bodies of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. to enable its Broadcasting and Film Commission to operate—to produce radio and television programs and films, to advertise, and to do research for religious productions? The amount the churches give for all of this would not cover the cost of a single one-hour commercial extravaganza. Thus, the churches can hardly accuse the sponsors of being irresponsible!

The audience and the producer join hands in determining what is seen. The object of the producer is to reach the largest possible segment of the public with that which will motivate a positive reaction. The producer is constantly measuring and sampling to determine results. If he begins losing his audience, he changes his offering. If his audience grows, he will spend amazing amounts of energy, talent, and money to improve and promote his program. In the final analysis, it is the audience reaction that determines which television programs and which movies are successful enough to become a pattern followed by other production companies.

Some years ago Gilbert Seldes, writing in *Saturday Review*, pointed out that dissatisfied viewers are prone to wonder if the communications industries underestimate the intelligence, taste, and maturity of the audience. He wisely said that this is like asking the movie and TV producers and advertising agencies, "How much longer do you intend to go on beating your wives?" to which they give a combination answer, "We aren't legally married" and "They love it."

In other words, so long as people who know better continue to watch cheap television programs, so long as they accept crudity and violence without protest and fail to speak appreciatively of good programs, just that long will poor television dominate the air. So long as cheap movies are good box office, and trite drama can show a colossal profit without eliciting an avalanche of protest, just that long will such stuff be put out by Hollywood. It is the audience that calls the signals.

"Very Truly Ours"

This implies a need for action. The viewer is not finished as a responsible citizen when the popcorn box is empty or the last commercial has been uttered. He needs to be articulate. Excellent programs have been kept on the air after they were scheduled for oblivion simply because a dozen letters of appreciation arrived at the crucial time. When we read of "howls of protest" over a dropping of a show, we should realize that probably no more than fifty active and articulate viewers are involved. And one letter of appreciation for the worth-while production is worth ten letters of protest over something tawdry. The leaders of the communications industry know that people of taste and culture are not given to writing letters to studios and stations. They may suspect that the "Telephone Hour" and Walt Disney's epics of American history and "Adventureland" films have won the gratitude of millions, but how many of us have ever supported their suspicion by sending along a post card of appreciation?

Here is one important way to watch television and movies: as a responsible citizen who is able to articulate a reaction. This is not censorship. This is guidance, and it is desired and gratefully received. Those who have written letters to a studio or TV station have been most pleasantly surprised at the personal and immediate response they have received. A sincere, thoughtful participation in program-planning is highly valued by an industry that lives to please the public.

So here is the first and most important condition for viewing movies and television: We must share responsibly in evaluating subjects so the industry may know that there is an audience that rejects the unworthy and appreciates its finest efforts.

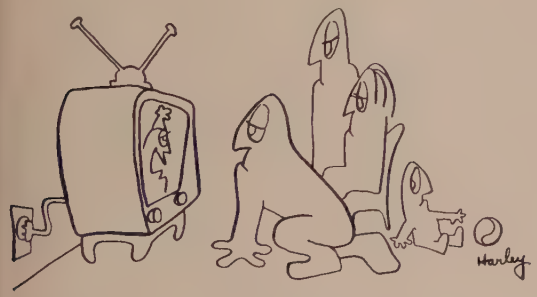
2: OPIATE OR STIMULANT?

'N THE October 15, 1959, issue of *Presbyterian Life*, . John R. Fry estimated that 15 per cent of all avail- ble TV programs are worth watching. Of course, h estimate such as this would vary with the locale nd the stations available to a viewer, but at least it is ne reliable critic's estimate. No such projection exists r movies. If a responsible audience were regularly voice its opinions and desires, the percentage would on climb. But there are also some other ways by hich television and movies can strengthen our homes id enlighten our lives instead of driving us to succumb the subtle domination of demoralizing influences.

Time on Your Wrists

A person can insist to himself that his attention and is time have some value. If he really believes that one f the most precious possessions in life is *time*, he will e jealous of all that wastes time or uses it to no avail. his belief can cause some radical changes in a person's abits.

His recreational hours will appear to him as times or genuine re-creation. He will guard against the lassy-eyed anesthetized attitude to which so many uccumb under the influence of the flickering screen. hat attitude leaves one powerless to get up and go ome when a movie insults the intelligence or taste nd paralyzes a person so that he sits and looks at the ame television channel no matter what sequence of hows may appear. This is still a free country. If a erson pulls a boner in selecting a movie or a television

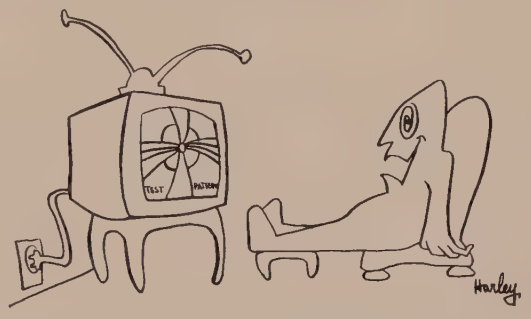


how, he is not condemned to suffer. He can get out and o home, or turn the set off and read a book. Such a easserion of freedom might help a person's morale as ell as his mind.

It is surprising how many people have never learned he blessed truth that they are the arbiters of their ime. People will bitterly lament the waste of time aused by a traffic tie-up and will endanger life and mb by driving at reckless speeds; and then they spend he saved minutes in the ridiculous activity of being ortured by some foolishness parading under the name f "entertainment."

On—Off—Volume

Especially in homes where there are children, it is wise to plan a television hour or a movie evening. Intelligent parents plan the time for programs that are good and try to make them family experiences. It takes only ten minutes one night a week to look through *TV Guide* or some other listing of programs and put *x* marks beside certain shows that appear to be outstanding. Post an abridged schedule on the family bulletin board—and then try to keep to the schedule. There is no reason why a television set should operate



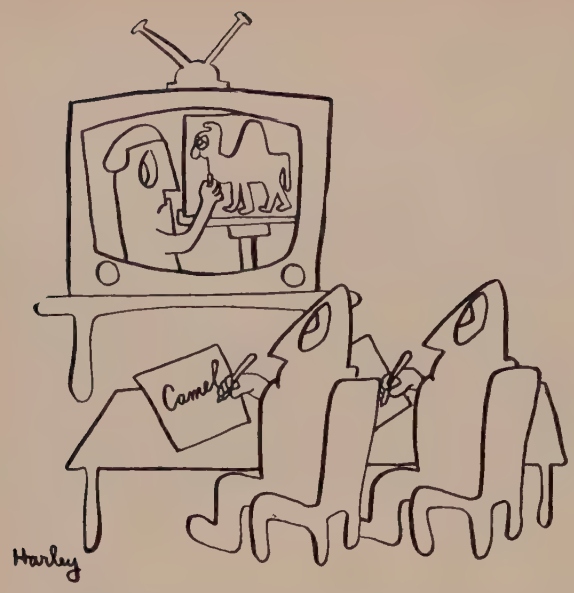
". . . He sits and looks at the same television channel no matter what sequence of shows may appear . . ."

ten or twelve hours a day. However, a discriminating use of the instrument several hours a week can be a valuable adjunct to family living. As for the movies, it is not always easy to plan what to attend—though it is pretty simple to select many shows that are obviously not fit for family consumption. Although it may be difficult to select movies that are fit to watch, few intelligent people will be so naïve as to take the publicity releases of Hollywood at face value.

Both movies and television programs are given critical evaluation in the pages of many magazines. For example, *Presbyterian Life, National Parent-Teacher, Parents'* magazine, *Saturday Review,* and the weekly news magazines often carry discriminating reviews. Those who recognize the power of visual methods in educating a child will not consider it a chore or a waste of time to do a little review reading and planning.

Beyond the Lowly Sponge

Actually, the greatest of values can accrue to home life if television and movies are used as a springboard for education. Careful selection can call forth a family project or a research experience that deepens life. For instance, science programs such as those produced some years ago by The Bell Telephone Company—"Our Mr. Sun," "Hemo the Magnificent," and others



like them—should send an alert family into a frenzy of encyclopedia searching and model building that would be worth a semester in a laboratory. The reading and conversation stemming from such experiences can have amazing possibilities. Even some of the better westerns may sometimes touch on aspects of American history and spots of local color that can do great things to minds, both young and old. And why not? A few years ago when Walt Disney's "Davy Crockett" was fresh, manufacturers made a mint of money from coonskin hats because young minds were stimulated. Many a wise parent used the same stimulation to teach some fine chapters of history and even to take field trips to spots of historic interest.

Perhaps it is unrealistic or utopian to visualize a time in the future when dinner conversation all over America will progress from the "Johnny-eat-your-carrots" stage to the level of real idea sharing. But some people, at least, think it might be a possibility with a little planning; and no better tool exists than these instruments of visual education. Think of what might be done in the areas of domestic political and social issues and international affairs if these media were used as a means to a larger end. The coverage of Mr. Khrushchev's visit to this country sent many people to the public libraries to study about the questions raised by his contact with America. The publicity given his interpreter, for instance, gave a new dignity to the study of foreign languages. Or consider programs such as "Meet the Press" and "Face the Nation" that raise giant questions concerning our Government and public philosophy. On occasion, Congressional committees take us behind the scenes of democratic action. There is almost no limit to the good that could come if a family—or a nation—were to wake up to the possibilities of going beyond the sponge type of viewing.

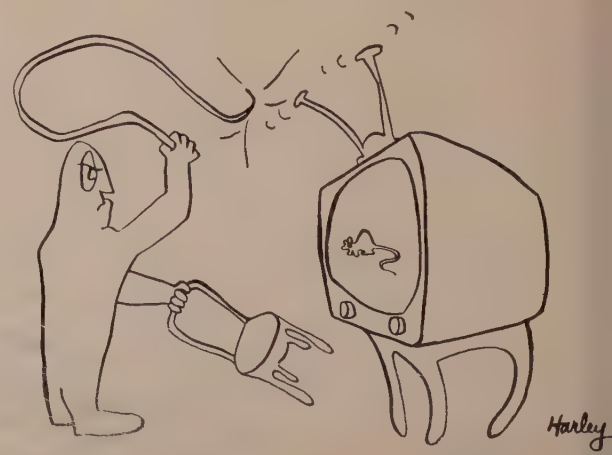
Public-school systems, universities, and civic groups are releasing some marvelous educational programs through commercial stations, as well as through UHF channels. Many courses may be taken for credit right in your own home. Or if you have no concern for academic credit, you can still satisfy the universal craving for knowledge by taking advantage of some of the offerings presented. Programs like Dr. White's "Continental Classroom" have several hundred thousand viewers who are gaining a basic knowledge in physics with which to understand the rapid changes in our modern culture. Religious programs in Washington, D.C., and in San Francisco began carrying Bible study through educational television to thousands of people who are hungry to receive it.

An old set can be supplied with a UHF converter at a very small cost and will greatly increase the value of your television viewing. Most new sets come equipped for UHF. It would be wise to investigate the opportunities available in educational television in your locality.

For the church as well as the home, television can provide great untapped resources for programs in study and discussion groups. We've taken the movies into the church and have learned something from them. We could do the same, in many areas, with the television set. For example, some of the programs produced or promoted by the Broadcasting and Film Commission can be released by a local station at a usable time for in-church viewing and would be excellent discussion-starting material. Leaders of adult education and informal study groups in the church who desire more information on Protestant programing should write to Rev. Lawrence W. McMaster, Jr., Executive Director, Department of Radio and Television of The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y.

What Are You Looking For?

The fine art of discrimination is one of the hallmarks of adulthood. To be able to determine what is valid, clarifying, illuminating, and satisfying, and what isn't, and why, is an acquired talent. A person's critical faculties need exercise if they are to develop



One of the best ways to develop one's powers of discrimination is to spend a few minutes talking about a movie or a television program after it has been seen. What did you think of it? Why? What made it interesting? In what sense was it true? What was different about it? Was it a good thing to produce, that is, was it "in the public interest," as the F.C.C. puts it? What about its technical and artistic aspects? Did it make you ask some questions that need answering? What questions? Is it not enough simply to look at a program? What were you looking *for?* Why was the program presented? What was it trying to say? Was it anything worth saying? Why? How would you have said it differently?

Homes where discrimination is developed will produce a generation dissatisfied with the cheap and the trivial. They may even give us a few great dramatists. At least we may finally be released from thralldom to Madison Avenue's baby talk and animated cartoons that show the inside of a man's head looking like a combination blacksmith shop and lightning storm. The American public can't be *that* uncritical!

Like most other good things, the values in movies and television depend on both the quality of the product and the judgments of the recipient—or in this case the viewer. How you watch and what you watch will determine whether or not the time you spent was worth it or was a terrible loss. Television and motion pictures can be either opiates or stimulants. You make the difference.

3: WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT

The Church in the World of Radio-Television, by John W. Bachman (Association Press, 1960; $3.50), sorts out all the tangled threads and makes merely complex what has heretofore been looked upon as an impossibly knotty problem. The world of radio-television has not to my knowledge been so aptly described by anyone else. For the first time a responsible churchman has ventured to discuss the church's relations to that curious dispenser of fluff, garbage, 21" Lanolin, and, occasionally, sheer beauty.

In a workmanlike way, Professor Bachman dismisses the angry church folk who won't have anything to do with radio-TV by showing the pervasive influence of these media. He helps the "television-is-evil" people to see that television is, instead, petty; and furthermore, it continues to be petty because most broadcasters, producers, sponsors, and viewers want it that way *or* won't risk making a change. Thus the author stimulates the reader to expose the whole body of his Christian faith to everything that he sees and hears: commercials, news programs, public-affairs programs, detective and western yarns, slick comedies, and church-produced shows. The individual churchman talking back to his set (and to his neighbor, wife, family, pastor, boss, the barber, postman, tax collector, and anyone else who can be made to listen) represents collectively the church's most powerful and least-used relationship to the mass media.

These largely informal and unplanned efforts of the church to raise the level of the audience and the programs which the audience sees do not exhaust the church's place in radio-television. The church, too, is a programer. It has time given to it (or sometimes buys time) in which to present a program of its own. The author raises some intriguing questions about what the

OUR GOD IS DEAD!

church has done with its time and what might be done. The church has a message. Does it hard-sell the message as though it were an automobile or a deodorant? Does it make up a story which points a useful moral? Does it try to present situations that will arouse questions—eventually leading the uncommitted viewer to consider the answer of the Christian faith? Should it buy a program—for instance, a national football bowl game with an audience of forty million—in order to have the "commercial" time for addressing the gospel to the audience? (What should the church *say,* if it did that sort of thing?)

Each question brings with it five cousin-like questions which cumulatively drive the church to face the dilemma: Should the church present itself *as a Christian institution* so that people will come to the church to hear the gospel, or should the church produce programs which communicate the gospel directly to the viewer? Bachman makes good sense at this point. He skillfully points out the way in which the viewer him-

THIS ARTICLE is reprinted from *Presbyterian Life,* March 1, 1960; John R. Fry's column "Seen and Heard." Used by permission.

self mixes up any program. For some viewers a program conceived to be basically evangelical is informative. Churchgoing viewers hear a discussion of social issues that seems to them to be evangelical. And so on. The author insists that whatever the church does do, it must do well.

That may sound like a dreary cliché. It could be. But it isn't, because the author takes it out of the clouds and places it amidst the practical affairs of program production, providing the reader with interesting clues concerning the intricate relationships between art and the Christian faith. Eventually he gets the matter back into the viewer's hands. The church-produced program depends on the viewer's dollars, the publicity he personally can give the program, his earnest and intelligent response to the program, and finally his discussion of it with friends.

The book has been written, I suspect, for the broadcaster and the professional churchman responsible for broadcasting, but the lay viewer (the lay reader) will benefit most of all by reading it. He belongs to both church and the world of radio-television as the one who pays the bills.

I read this book one Sunday afternoon before watching a Leonard Bernstein program which featured the creative artistry of Glenn Gould, Eileen Farrell, and Igor Stravinsky. Ninety minutes later, CBS brought out what may have been the best program of 1960, "The Fabulous Fifties." With bold satirical strokes this program emphasized the sometimes profound, sometimes profane, and often grotesque, influence that television has had on the last decade of our national life. This is the world that the church is in, and this is the world that is, perhaps, too much in the church.

UNIT III

A Striving After Wind *By John W. Stettner*

1: KOHELETH—ANCIENT SKEPTIC

Read quickly through the whole book of Ecclesiastes in one sitting.

"Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'; before the sun and the light, and the moon, and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain; in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look through the windows are dimmed, and the doors on the street are shut; when the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low; they are afraid also of what is high, and terrors are in the way; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along and desire fails; because man goes to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets; before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity." (*Eccl. 12: 1-8.*)

"No book in the Bible is more puzzling than the book of Ecclesiastes. The author seems to be bitter and disappointed with life. 'Vanity of vanities,' he says; 'all is vanity.' What does it mean that here in the very middle of the Bible you come upon a man whose words have such a pessimistic sound?" [1]

"One who speaks in an assembly" is the simple meaning of the book's title, "Ecclesiastes." This word is a Latin translation of the Hebrew word that is transliterated "Koheleth," the name by which we shall henceforth refer to the author of this Old Testament book. No other identification of the author is known. In the early part of the book there is the assertion that the author was a "king in Jerusalem," the implication being that he was the wise King Solomon. This must be recognized, however, as a common literary device of the time, when writers ascribed their works to famous personages of the past. The circumstances and content of the book make it quite clear that it could not possibly have been written by King Solomon. So the identity of the writer remains unknown, and he is described as "Koheleth"—one who speaks in an assembly.

This book is part of the so-called "wisdom literature" of the Old Testament, of which the book of The Proverbs and The Book of Job are also examples. Koheleth did not assume that he spoke *for* God, in the sense in which the prophets often spoke; rather, he

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[1] From *God Has Spoken*, by David Noel Freedman and James D. Smart. The Westminster Press. Copyright, 1949, by W. L. Jenkins.

spoke *about* God, though actually not so much about *God* as about the *vanity of men*. No other book of the Bible faces more squarely the deep questions men ask about the meaning of life or faces more honestly the cold, hard realities of life.

From a purely literary standpoint, Koheleth's book leaves much to be desired. The form and structure of the book are rather vague and hard to define. There does not seem to be a central unifying theme that is systematically developed. These characteristics have led, in fact, to widely different interpretations of the book. It is apparent that any attempt to fit this book into a neat scheme or to interpret it by a single formula is doomed to failure. Koheleth himself may have had some pattern in mind as he put his material together, but, if so, it eludes us today. As with any writer, he no doubt made certain assumptions about his readers (or his hearers) and spoke on the basis of these assumptions. But he did not say what these assumptions were, so we can only make some inferences about the situation and conditions of Israel in the midst of which he spoke.

A Passion for the Deepest Truth

It has been rightly observed that, in attempting to understand someone, it is important to know what he is *against*. This may be a helpful approach in trying to understand Koheleth. In order to do this we must take some note of the time and situation in which Koheleth lived and worked. Scholars generally date this book between 250 and 200 B.C. It is likewise generally assumed that the author lived in Palestine, probably in Jerusalem. This means that the book was written at a time when Israel was under foreign political control, when Greek culture and thought were a dominant influence, and when Egyptian ideas were also common in a cosmopolitan center like Jerusalem. It does not follow, however, that Koheleth was particularly a student of Greek philosophy or Egyptian thought, for this does not seem to be the case. Koheleth spoke as a Jew to the situation in the religious life of Israel in his day. What was the situation in the religious life of Israel?

The great thrust of faith represented by the prophets had spent itself. The wisdom writers had taken over. The dynamic faith of the prophets had crystallized into pat, mechanical formulations, which often seemed to be little more than pious justifications of the *status quo*. Thus, despite the fact that Koheleth himself is now classified as one of the wisdom writers, he was speaking out against such material as the book of The Proverbs contains—the bright sayings, the aphorisms, the practical wisdom by which the "good life" was to be achieved. If Koheleth had no great new ringing call to faith, he nevertheless had no time for the endless word-spinning of wise sayings that presumed to offer ultimate answers. The proverb collectors, however, represented the main stream of Israel's religious life, and this movement subsequently developed into the mass of detailed external legalism that set the stage for the Messiah. There is no great Messianic sense as such in Koheleth, although there is a strong sense of God's "otherness" and his ultimate control over things. But it was still possible for a tough-minded personality like Koheleth to disassociate himself from the religiosity of the proverb collectors, whereas in later generations faithful Jews found themselves hopelessly ensnared in the minutiae of the law. The proverb collectors and the legalists attempted to reduce God to wise sayings and laws. Koheleth stands with those who know that God cannot be so reduced and contained and who are aware of the mysteries of God.

Koheleth is sometimes referred to as a skeptic. The correctness of this description rests upon what is meant by skeptic. Koheleth is very skeptical about the easy answers, rationalizations, and self-justifications of men. He is also skeptical about man's capacity to understand very much about God. But he is not skeptical about God. In this respect he is quite different from modern skeptics, who generally express sympathetic confidence in man but are extremely dubious about God. With sensitive realism and utter candor, Koheleth confronts the most perplexing questions that perennially trouble men and refuses to accept easy answers. In this respect he makes real contact with the modern existentialists, who are aware of aspects of reality that ordinarily escape less sensitive human beings. Koheleth is skeptical of platitudes and superficialities and concerned for full awareness of reality, with a passion for the deepest truth about life.

A Rugged Individualist

Though we do not know the identity of Koheleth, we can surmise a great deal from his writings about the sort of person he was. It is reasonable to assume that he was an old man when he wrote down the material for this book. This is suggested by the great variety of activities in which he says he has participated in times past and the various stages through which his thinking about life has passed. Also, Koheleth speaks with a kind of mellow understanding of things that is the fruit of years of experience and a "heap of living." It would seem that he was economically well off, if not wealthy, since he seems to have been able to indulge himself as he wished. He mentions no economic hardship in his own experience, but this has not blinded him to the hardships of others who were less fortunate than he. He refers repeatedly to his pursuit of wisdom, which implies some connection with the various schools of his day, first as a student, and later, perhaps, as a teacher. But, intellectually at least, Koheleth was a rugged individualist. He did not just adopt other people's points of view because they were conventional or popular.

It appears that politically Koheleth was a conformist. That is, he did not attempt to criticize the political situation in which he lived or suggest any changes. But this attitude followed from at least two kinds of things: First, it must be remembered that although Israel was

under foreign domination politically, it was not a time of severe oppression or persecution. In fact, it was a time of relative peace and prosperity, the conquerors and the conquered having achieved an amicable working relationship. We may assume that the prevailing attitude was to avoid stirring up trouble when things were going along as well as they were. Furthermore, from a realistic viewpoint, the Jews had very little chance of doing anything about their situation. A hundred years or so later the fires of rebellion erupted in the Maccabean revolt, but this could not have happened in Koheleth's time.

Secondly, Koheleth was primarily interested in how the *individual* could make some sense out of his life, given the situation as it was. Koheleth was not really interested in social institutions as such. Today it is still very difficult to find any analysts of the human situation who are able to take both individual needs and social structures with equal seriousness. Most analysts lean toward one side or the other.

Unintimidated by Mystery

William James, in his famous book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* describes two types of persons, each having a characteristic form of religious experience. One type James calls the "healthy-minded" individual, whose religious experience is characterized as "once-born." The other type he calls "the sick soul," whose religious experience is characterized as "twice-born." It must be noted immediately that these terms do not imply any value judgment; that is, it is not necessarily better to be a "healthy-minded" individual than a "sick soul." The "healthy-minded" person is one who goes through life without any deep sense of tragedy, one who never finds it necessary to take evil very seriously. Thus, such a person is usually quite confident and optimistic. "The sick soul," on the other hand, is a person who is very sensitive to evil in the world, who has a deep sense of tragedy, and who feels a need to be "saved" by some power outside himself. Such persons usually experience a dramatic turning about in their lives, which often has been described as "being born again." Neither of these types ever exists in pure form; the type is itself a composite model of many related experiences.

So it is with Koheleth. He does not fit completely into either of James's types. Yet these descriptions may help us to understand Koheleth better. He was essentially a "healthy-minded" person whose religious experience was of the "once-born" variety. He apparently never suffered any severe setbacks in life that caused him to feel defeated and powerless. He had a sense of the mystery surrounding God, but he did not seem to be intimidated by this. He could see evil in himself and in the world around him, but he was not "sick" about it. On the other hand, he was certainly no optimist! He faced reality and called a spade a spade. The picture he painted of life is not one of rosy-hued optimism. But it simply would not have occurred to Koheleth that God could or would intervene directly in the affairs of men or in an individual's life in such a way that the person would feel that he had been born again.

Therefore, in trying to understand Koheleth and the significance of his message for us today, it is important to keep in mind the obvious and admitted limitations of his point of view. Koheleth did not have a corner on the *whole* truth, any more than any other Biblical writer, but he saw an important aspect of it.

2: WHAT ARE YOU AIMING FOR?

Read *Eccl. 2: 4-23; 4: 4; chs. 7; 8; 5: 10-17.*

The history of the United States in its first one hundred and fifty years is the story of a new nation being built. There were new frontiers to be explored, cities to be developed, primitive natives to be subdued, and rich natural resources to be tapped and harnessed. There was much to be done, and there were plenty of strong men and women to do it. They did so well, in fact, that the new nation developed more rapidly than any other in history and soon became the most powerful nation on earth. This national success story became a model for the "American dream." Horatio Alger became the symbol of the poor boy rising to financial success and prestige. Abe Lincoln became the symbol of the humble farm boy who could go from his log cabin to the White House. Generation after generation of parents, even if they had not reached the pinnacle of success themselves, pushed their children to achieve greater measures of success.

"There Are More Things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio . . ."

But just now there are many signs that success as the aim of life is a bankrupt aim. Many things about our situation have changed. The geographic frontiers are gone. Our productive capacity as a nation is so great that production has to be limited in various ways so that our economic system is not thrown off balance. Our problem now is not one of expansion but of consolidation of our gains. Our economic system is so complex that individuals now seek merely to find a place in the great machine, not necessarily to try to get to the top. In short, the Horatio Alger success story does not ring true today, and men know that, even if they wanted to, it is not so easy to achieve "top o' the heap" success. Some still drive for the pinnacle, but it is apparent that there is a price to be paid in terms of personal unhappiness.

This success theme in our national way of life has

been expressed in a concentration on externals—wealth, gadgets, social status, prestige, and so on. All along, it was tacitly assumed that, if a man secured these external trappings, his internal needs as a person would be met automatically. Indeed, in a frontier society there is little time to notice inner personal needs, for there is so much to be done outside. Now, in our economy of abundance, there is more time for persons to become aware of themselves, but we're not used to this and we don't like it. We much prefer to concentrate on externals. The psychoanalyst has become the symbol of what is needed to patch up people who cannot stand the conflict of pressures from within and without.

Since success has begun to lose its vitality as a worthy aim for life, there has been a subtle shift to *security* as an aim. Young people now are not nearly so interested in the chances of advancement in a job as they are in the "fringe benefits"—health insurance, pension plan, paid vacation. Not only financial security but "peace of mind" security is sought after by millions of people. Events, not only in our own country but in the world, have conspired to produce deep feelings of insecurity, so we easily fall prey to anything that has a security label on it.

"... than Are Dreamt of in Your Philosophy"

History never repeats itself exactly; no two situations or eras are identical. But the same themes reappear in different forms and combinations from time to time in the history of mankind. Koheleth noted this, saying that "there is nothing new under the sun." And he made some observations about success and security as aims in life that are no doubt as valid today as when he uttered them.

Koheleth declares that striving after success is vain on several counts. First, those who achieve it often do not find happiness as a result. "All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied," Koheleth says. (*Ch. 6: 7.*) The reason men toil so hard for things is that they envy their neighbor (see *ch. 4: 4*), and this is an insatiable desire. Furthermore, all a rich man can do is *look* at his possessions—he can *use* only so much. And unhappily, a rich man often has trouble sleeping—"even in the night his mind does not rest" (*ch. 2: 23*). "The surfeit of the rich will not let him sleep." (*Ch. 5: 12.*) The rich also have to worry constantly about losing their possessions. Koheleth makes another point about the unhappy riches that sounds very much like "Parkinson's law." Koheleth says, "When goods increase, they increase who eat them." (*Ch. 5: 11.*) The substance of the much-discussed Parkinson's law today is, "As income rises, expenditures rise to meet it."

A second kind of reason why striving after success is vain is Koheleth's oft-repeated observation that you "can't take it with you." (See *ch. 5: 13-17.*) A man works and toils and piles up many possessions, and then he has to die and leave it all to someone else who didn't work for it. The inheritor may be a fool who will simply squander it all. Some men don't even have anyone to leave their wealth to, but they work away just as if there were some purpose in it, never stopping to enjoy any of the fruit of their labors. (See *ch. 4: 7-8.*) We come naked and with nothing into the world, and naked and with nothing will we leave the world. So what is the point, Koheleth asks, in getting so exercised about success during our brief span of life? Furthermore, worldly success does not bring security, for we can be struck down in the twinkling of an eye and deprived of everything we own, without a moment's notice. As Koheleth says, "Like fish which are taken in an evil net, and like birds which are caught in a snare, so the sons of men are snared at an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them." (*Ch. 9: 12.*) The sum of the matter for Koheleth is that for all of man's toil there is really no profit, no surplus, nothing left over when he is through.

Let it be noted that for many of us today success and security are the *hidden* aims in life. Success seekers have been so widely caricatured that no sophisticated person would admit that this was his aim. As for security, we have likewise been pretty well disillusioned about the possibility of any real, lasting security in this world. Even the insurance salesman will admit, "One never has enough insurance." Furthermore, many of us are really afraid to try very hard for success or security in our highly competitive society, because we don't believe we have much chance to achieve either. So there are many songs of sour grapes being sung about the futility of success and security as life aims. But Koheleth was not crying "sour grapes." He had really given success and security a whirl and had apparently achieved the maximum of both. His final word about them (see *ch. 1: 14*) was that they were "a striving after wind."

Your Portion in Life

Our trouble today is that we do not have any aim for life to replace success and security. Hence, we are in the anomalous and abnormal position of not being able to espouse these aims openly and honestly, yet having no other aims instead. For all their irresponsible, unkempt, narcotic ways, the Beatniks are more honest at this point than most of us. They honestly face the emptiness of success and let go of it as a worthy aim for life. They honestly face the impossibility of security and let go of that too. A serious question, which we respectable citizens must ask ourselves, is whether or not we are so caught in the toils of striving for success and security that any attempt to free ourselves must involve the violent and disordered reaction of the Beatniks. In other words, is there any way out for us besides becoming bongo drummers or narcotics addicts? As one writer put it, after he had made a serious study of them, the Beatniks are rather pitiful rebels, but they are the only rebels we have!

What did Koheleth suggest as an alternative? He passed through a period of disillusionment when he saw

the emptiness of success and security. But he didn't go out and jump off a cliff. He awoke to the fact that it is *God* who gives us work to do *and* the capacity to enjoy it, as well as other elemental pleasures in life. So Koheleth said, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might." (*Ch. 9: 10.*) Elsewhere he says: "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God; for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?" (*Ch. 2: 24-25.*) Again, he says: "Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life which he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life." (*Ch. 9: 9.*) He cautions against excesses, either in righteousness or in self-indulgence, and gives wisdom only a relative value as, for instance, that of light over darkness.

What Koheleth seems to be saying is that life is basically good, if it is understood to come from God, and that all things are in God's hands. We get into trouble when we set up the *relative* goods of life as *ultimate* goods, and forget that God is the author and giver of all things. This includes *all* man's wisdom and knowledge, which are partial and relative. Man may have been created only a little lower than the angels, but it is enough lower so that he can never be like God, and he always gets into difficulty when he begins to act like God. The great inscrutable fact of death awaits us all, and beyond that we cannot see anything clearly or definitely.

3: THE RIGHT TIME

Read *Eccl. 3: 1-15.*

YOUNG parents are usually fascinated by the growth and development of their children, particularly the first-born. Many parents avidly read one of the popular books on child development to see what is coming next. Changes occur rather rapidly, though often imperceptibly, and some parents become alarmed when their baby doesn't seem to be on the "schedule" outlined in the book—unless, of course, he is more advanced than the book indicates, in which case they are sure they have a child prodigy on their hands.

The fact is, there is much going on in a child that no parent can fully comprehend. Books about child development are based upon statistical averages and never exactly fit any particular child. There is an inner as well as an outer pattern of development that is very complicated and that defies all schedules parents may seek to impose upon a child. In short, there is an individual process of *timing* going on in the growth of each child, most of which can be seen only later as the parents look back on what has happened. The most important thing that parents have to learn is to cooperate with the timing process that is taking place. The difficulty is that there is no foolproof scheme for "reading the signs of the times," and so all parents make mistakes. They pull when they ought to push, or they push when they ought to pull. Usually one of the most difficult learning tasks to be accomplished by a child is toilet training. It is very hard for a parent to know the right time to push for the learning of this task by a child, for there must be not only a physical readiness but an emotional readiness in the child. On the other hand, when a child is learning to walk his parents are often tempted to pick him up every time he falls down, whereas part of the child's task is learning to pick himself up and to keep his balance. When to help and when to keep hands off is the constant dilemma of parents.

The Rhythm of Mystery

There is a great mystery in this timing process that is close to the mystery of birth itself. Learning to deal with the problem as parents is only one example, however, of the importance of right timing in life. As Koheleth puts it, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (*Eccl. 3: 1.*) What Koheleth is pointing to here is the mysterious timing over which we have no control and of which we are only dimly aware. There is "a time to be born, and a time to die," he says, hinting at the mystery that is involved in these events. Then follows a series of contrasting activities of life, all illustrating Koheleth's point that, in the scheme of things, there is a divine timing to which we are subject. Koheleth no doubt had a further idea in mind as he listed these fourteen contrasts—that there is a rhythm in life whereby one activity is succeeded by its opposite. Thus, there is a time to plant and a time to reap, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to keep silence and a time to speak.

What are these "times"? They are not times arbitrarily chosen by us; there is always a hidden preparation going on, whether we realize it or not. They are times that come by the grace of God and in his own good time. Writing about this passage in his book *The New Being*, Paul Tillich says that Koheleth "is first of all conscious that he *is* timed, and he points to our timing as a secondary matter." Nevertheless, it is important that we try to be sensitively aware of the *right time* to act, for there is a right time and a wrong time. Another Biblical writer has reminded us (*Isa. 55: 6-9*) that God's ways are not our ways, and God's thoughts are not our thoughts; Koheleth might have added that God's time is not our time. Koheleth asks us to remember this fact and act accordingly.

In some ways modern man is aware of the importance of timing. Those who deal on the stock market

might add to Koheleth's list, "There is a time to buy and a time to sell." But here the timing involves a shrewd calculation about the economic processes, which have little to do with what Koheleth is talking about. Too often a man may have a healthy respect for the economic laws that govern the timing of his business deals, but have no sense at all of God's timing in the important events of his life. If such a person has learned to capitalize on his sense of timing in the business world, he may be fooled into thinking that he can time the crucial events of his personal life. Koheleth has the last word to say about such a man: "This also is vanity and a striving after wind" (*ch. 4: 4*).

Being Sensitive to the "Moment"

Certainly one of the crucial events of life is falling in love and getting married. Perhaps these two things should not be so lightly assumed to go together, for undoubtedly some people fall in love but do not get married, for one reason or another. On the other hand, some people get married who have never fallen in love. Ideally, however, the two should go together if either is to be fully consummated.

People who have had this consummate experience testify to a timing beyond their control; they feel there is something about "finding each other" that is a wonderful gift. Apparently there is a time when one is ready to fall in love—that is, to open oneself to another and be ready to take another into one's own life. Lovers often feel that their coming together was predestined by the stars and that they (and only they) were meant for each other. This can never be proved or disproved. But it is evident that there comes a moment when two people "click," and often no one is more surprised than they.

Because this experience always involves another person, there is at least this indeterminate factor about falling in love and getting married—if you never meet another person who helps to create this experience for you, you just don't experience it. However, what more commonly thwarts this experience for many people is lack of awareness when opportunity knocks. Some people just withdraw from possibilities, either consciously or unconsciously; others so surround themselves with blocks or barriers that they are practically invulnerable. The girl, for example, who is determined to "marry money" may close herself off to other possibilities that come her way and so remain single. Or a boy who is dead set on marrying a glamour queen may miss out on a relationship of love because his vision was so highly selective. Although "falling in love" does not seem to be something we can either manufacture or control, still it seems that we can prevent it from happening by not being sensitive to the "moment" when it comes.

Arc of the Sun

Modern sciences of man, especially biology and psychology, have helped us understand the importance of timing in the process of human development. The Swiss psychiatrist Carl G. Jung emphasizes the significance of doing the right thing at the right time in life. Children, he says, have to become aware of themselves as persons, separate from other persons and things. This stage must give way to the next, in youth, of learning how to relate positively to other people and to things. The task of the young adult is to find his place in the world, which includes choice of a vocation and choice of a mate. Up to this point in life a person's development is properly *expansive*—that is, the personality is expanding with respect to the external world—and the goal is achievement. But there is a mid-point at which the pattern and goal of development should begin to change. The second half of life is no longer expansive in the same sense the first half was. In the second half of life there should be a development of one's inner *spiritual* resources; the goal now should be increased self-awareness—awareness of one's essential self as spirit. Jung likens this whole process to the arc of the sun in the course of a day—rising out of the mysterious darkness in the morning, climbing to its zenith at noon, descending in the afternoon; and finally setting again at evening into the mysterious darkness. To know the "arc" of one's life is to act appropriately at each stage along the way. If this is not accomplished, one is disoriented in life.

It appears that Koheleth was aware of the "arc" in his life. In his younger years he had launched out boldly to try everything Life (with a capital "L") had to offer. But in his later years he turned inward to discover the resources of his own spirit, and with the wisdom of age he could say that God "has made everything beautiful in its time" (*ch. 3: 11*). Some feel that Koheleth, in this beautiful ode to time, reflects a deterministic and fatalistic attitude toward time. But it isn't necessarily so. It is hard to know, from the printed page, what his attitude was; we could know much better by the tone of his voice. It seems at least possible that instead of complaining fatalistically, Koheleth is here describing in his very realistic way what he perceives the situation to be. And after pointing out that God "has made everything beautiful in its time," he goes on to say, "also he has put eternity into man's mind, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end." That is, God has given men the capacity to sense the divine dimension to life, although they cannot fully understand it. If they fully understood it, there would be no distinction between God and men, between Creator and creatures. This is enough for Koheleth, and he declares, "I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has made it so, in order that men should fear before him" (*v. 14*). In other words, men live their entire lives in the midst of God's grace, and the only events that endure permanently are those ordained by God. Far from being fatalistic determinism, this is the epitome of mature wisdom, if our faith means anything at all.

4: ALTERNATIVE TO FUTILITY

Read *Eccl. 2: 13-16; 7: 19-29; 8: 16-17; 11: 5; 12: 12-14; 5: 1-2.*

IN THE Western world today, and especially in our own country, there are many signs of an attitude of futility. The theme of most modern art forms is *pathos.* Our situation is not characterized by noble aspirations or tragic downfalls but by "sick" humor. Nor do we live in an age of faith, when a religious story of redemption is told and retold in many different forms. The symbols of our time are not the powerful heroes of Greek drama nor the pilgrims making their way toward paradise. The symbols of our time are pathetic little men for whom nothing seems to work out right, men who are bored to death with the meaninglessness of their existence. Much of modern painting utilizes abstract and sometimes ghoulish imagery. Much of modern music is a wild cacophony of disharmony or a regression to primitive, sensuous rhythms. Through all the art forms runs a theme recounting how modern man has become all mixed up with machines and how he plaintively attempts to reassert his humanity. The monuments we are leaving behind us are monuments to our technical skill, not monuments of the spirit.

The Mystery Surrounding God

The sense of futility is associated with the frustration of the spirit. Little wonder, then, that in such periods of history futility abounds. The chances are that an underlying sense of futility characterized Koheleth's nation too. There are various forms this can take. Some people affect an attitude of blasé complacency, pretending not to see what is going on. Others assume an attitude of resigned withdrawal—"the world is going to pot in a basket; I can't do anything to stop it, so let it go." Still others fasten on to some panacea-type solution and become frantically active in its behalf.

But Koheleth stood over against all such manifestations of futility. For him life was futile only when the proper perspective on it was lost, when men tried to make something of it that it is not. Inevitably it follows that when men seek to live life on their own terms they become disillusioned and are overcome by a sense of futility. The only way life can mean anything at all is if it is seen as a response to God—and even then we do not have all the pieces to the puzzle because we run headlong into the mystery surrounding God.

Always there are some men who are optimistic about eventually finding all the pieces of the puzzle. It was true in Koheleth's time, and it is true in ours. Koheleth himself had been hopeful at one time in his life, he tells us, about the satisfactions that wisdom would bring. He zealously set out to learn all he could learn. But he discovered that, when he tried to put together all the bits of knowledge he had acquired, they didn't add up to anything. He reports, "I said, 'I will be wise'; but it was far from me." (*Ch. 7: 23.*) The more he learned, the more he found out he didn't know. He concluded, "That which is, is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out?" (*V. 24.*) To be sure, there is a practical value in wisdom: "Then I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness. The wise man has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness" (*ch. 2: 13-14*). However, the same fate ultimately befalls both the wise man and the fool: both will be forgotten after they are dead (*v. 16*). Often the world does not reward the wise either (*ch. 9: 13-15*). However, it is when the basic questions of existence are considered that the insufficiency of wisdom is most clearly revealed. Wisdom provides no key to unlock the mystery of the meaning of life, for this involves God, and God is inscrutable. "When I applied my mind to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on earth, . . . then I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that, is done under the sun. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out; even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out." (*Ch. 8: 16-17.*) Also, Koheleth says, "As you do not know how the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything." (*Ch. 11: 5.*)

The Center of True Religiousness

We must remember that these were very strong words which Koheleth spoke to his contemporaries, who expected too much of wisdom. They are also strong words for our contemporaries, who often speak and act as if they were just on the verge of ultimate answers. A particular kind of wisdom, which we call "science," is our current shibboleth. Many people in our time have hailed science as the new savior of mankind. "We are entering the post-Christian era," they say, and "God is dead." But a modern rabbi—Rabbi Israel Goldstein, speaking in the tradition of Koheleth, had this to say to his New York congregation some time ago:[1]

"In our generation we are witnessing the 'Gotterdammerung' of technology—the dethronement of science as the savior of mankind. While science may enhance the comforts of living it can never create human happiness, nor can it ever exhaust the mysteries of the universe."

[1] Quoted in *New Frontiers in Living*, by Howard Whitman. Copyright, 1960, by Howard Whitman. The Register and Tribune Syndicate, Des Moines, Iowa. Used by permission.

Strangely enough, it is the topflight scientists themselves who are now speaking about the limitations of science. Many scientists who have probed most deeply into the mysteries of the universe and have made the most significant discoveries are the very ones who feel most sure that science cannot supply ultimate answers about life's meaning. Astronomer Fred L. Whipple of Harvard University recently commented that "an oxcart is as useful to man as a rocket ship if he does not know where he wants to go." [1] And the late great physicist, Albert Einstein, wrote:

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.

"This insight into the mystery of life, coupled though it be with fear, has also given rise to religion. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive form—this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religiousness." [1]

Thus it is more the consumer followers of science than the scientists themselves who tend to *worship* at its shrines. We who are the recipients of the many benefits of science are tempted to look to it for *all* our answers. This is perhaps the crux of the difficulty—we simply want answers, without the discipline of seeking for them. It is as characteristic of the scientist as of the truly religious man that he seeks for truth, not for easy answers to his problems. So many of us are neither scientific nor religious as we strive to avoid a disciplined seeking after truth and childishly demand packaged answers.

One of the most important messages Koheleth has for us today is just this: Do not look for neat, packaged answers to profound questions. Doing this is surely one of the things that leads to a sense of futility. It was no doubt due to the fact that Koheleth was such an open-minded seeker for truth that he was preserved from being overcome with futility. The psychiatrist, Carl Jung, confirms this point of view from his researches. He says:

"The serious problems of life . . . are never fully solved. If it should for once appear that they are, this is the sign that something has been lost. The meaning and design of a problem seem not to lie in its solution, but in our working at it incessantly. This alone preserves us from stultification and petrifaction." [2]

[2] From *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, by Carl G. Jung. Translated by W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes. Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959. Used by permission.

Thus it was that Koheleth stood so opposed to the wisdom writers of his day, who attempted to reduce religion to neat formulas, maxims, and rules.

The Saving Doubt

Koheleth's book is so intriguing precisely because it says so little about God. "God" is mentioned directly only about forty times in the entire book, and it is not until the fifth chapter that Koheleth says anything about the way man should conduct himself before God. Then there are only a few short verses on this subject. Obviously, what Koheleth does not say is almost as important as what he does say. In short, he practices what he preaches! He is intent upon showing men the folly and vanity of their ways and stimulating them, perhaps, to think more deeply about their relationship to God. To counter the wisdom writers' "package deal" on God, Koheleth insists on letting God be God, in all his mystery and inscrutability. In *ch. 5: 1-2,* he writes: "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know that they are doing evil. Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few."

But what has this to do with us as Christians? Do we not stand in a new relation to God as a result of the advent of Jesus Christ? Do we not see in Jesus Christ the "human face of God"? Are we not convinced that God came very close to us in the event of Jesus Christ, taking our nature upon himself and pouring out his lifeblood in our behalf? If we stand in the Christian faith, we must answer these questions in the affirmative. To do so, however, in no way alters the fact that we still have unlimited capacities for vanity. It is still possible for us to dissipate the effectiveness of the new covenant in Jesus Christ, even as it was possible for men to dissipate the effectiveness of the old covenants that God made through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Vain creatures that we are, we always try to reduce the covenant to easily manageable proportions. We lose the awe and mystery that are always part of a covenant relationship with God. We are altogether too willing to settle for "ten easy rules for being a Christian." (A recent newspaper advertisement offers printed directions on "How to receive the Holy Ghost, and learn to speak in tongues.")

Shortly after Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated a few years ago, he was described by Walter Lippmann as one of the great saints and seers of the ages. Lippmann noted that one of the characteristics of such saints is "having a saving doubt in the last reaches of conviction." This is what we need—a saving doubt in the last reaches of conviction, which saves us from pride and vanity. This humility—and a lifelong search for deeper truth—is the alternative to futility. It was so for Koheleth, and it can be so for us.

RESOURCES FOR STUDY IN A

Parents' Discussion Group

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The Problem Parent in a Problem Culture
2. Love Myths in Songs
3. The Defense of Chastity
4. Youth in the Organized Society
5. Into a World of Tenderness and Competence

The Problem Parent in a Problem Culture

THE teen-ager who has come to his adolescence unprepared to cope with sexual conflicts has been mistreated by the adult world and, furthermore, he will probably not make any satisfactory solution to the conflicts he encounters. He may become a delinquent, participating in unsanctioned sexual activities, or he may flee the conflicts caused by his own sexual desires, the attractiveness of the opposite sex, and the strong prohibitions in his society against antemarital sexual relations.[1] In either case, his lack of preparation has seriously inhibited his chances of growing into healthy adulthood.

This conclusion was reached by the psychiatric faculty of Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia when interviewed by the editors on the subject. The faculty, twenty teachers and teaching fellows—most of them practicing psychiatrists, agreed also:

1. Because the period of adolescence is almost too late a time to *begin* effective sex education, this project should be started in early childhood (four to six years of age) and continued through adolescence.

2. Because many parents have not received basically good sex education themselves, they need opportunity to talk with other parents, particularly those who have. Often public adult discussion can prepare a parent to talk with his children. Public discussion can also help to clarify a parent's attitudes. So, actually, the parent will provide his children with a better sex education because his own attitudes will have become clearer.

3. The Christian church has too often been a guilt-ladling, inferiority-inducing agency and too seldom a strength-giving agency. The church, thus, has often unwittingly afflicted the teen-ager with the kind of guilt that makes him resentful against the position of the church and thus handicaps him in his adult sexual life.

4. Responsible sex education deals with attitudes toward physiological facts more than it does with the facts themselves; thus, essentially, parents are undertaking sex education as they interpret to their children the official attitudes of society as well as their own parental attitudes. Ultimately, the doctors agreed, adolescents need a clear picture of what their society stands for. Parents perform an invaluable service to their teen-ager by helping him to understand the values of the society; parents who outline their personal values in religious terms are under the same educative obligation to make the values clear.

These general conclusions were reached after extended conversation. They are not merely voted-on conclusions. Quite the contrary. They represent the points at which the group of doctors made specific recommendations to parents or said something concrete about the modern teen-ager and his sexuality.

Parents may be interested in some of the particular parts of the faculty conversation. It considered, for instance, the plight of many teen-agers who feel (and are) neglected by their parents. These teen-agers often engage in antemarital sexual relationships in angry protest against their neglectful parents. Sometimes they see that the adult world does not live by its own standards. Sometimes teen-agers act out the unconscious desires of parents—which are, by definition, unknown to those parents. Thus the teen-ager does what he feels the parent deeply wishes to do. This is a *plight,* because the real problem is not the sexual activity, but the irresponsible, neglectful parent, who may not pay much attention to these matters until the teen-ager is "caught" or becomes party to an antemarital pregnancy.

[1] A term used by doctors to designate sexual relations *before* (*ante*) marriage.

The head of the faculty suggested that most teen-agers would welcome stronger, more reliable sanctions, even though, as a matter of course, they protest against any sanctions. He pointed out that, although there is no particular magic connected with the hour of midnight, a particular, specified hour can act as a kind of psychological chastity belt. Youngsters who have to be home before a predetermined time have a time limit and accept that limit with psychological relief. Their verbal disagreement with the limit should not be taken seriously.

Various members of the group of doctors pointed out that the present teen-ager receives more publicity than the adolescent of previous generations, but surely is no more sexually irresponsible than a boy or a girl of his own age in another time. In fact, he may be *more* responsible than adolescents of previous generations. He knows more and acts with more honesty. This point provoked argument that was by no means settled.

Speaking as *doctors,* these men were especially concerned to point out that, regardless of the source or authenticity of the restrictions placed on adolescent sexual activity, these restrictions, as they are given voice at the present time by church, school, and home, produce a great deal of psychological damage. The restrictions in themselves have a real value, but they are presented in such a way that the teen-ager wants to fight against them and defy them.

One doctor sought to draw attention to the damaging aspects of our restrictions and the way society makes them on the teen-ager by referring to life in the Marshall Islands. In these South Pacific islands, he observed, no restrictions are placed on adolescent sexual activity. There are no neurotic, ill-adjusted adults, and consequently no psychiatrists—because they aren't needed. Of course, the whole faculty agreed that life on the Marshall Islands is simply not transferable to life in the complex Western world. Similarly, the faculty expressed admiration for the psychological health of the Navaho Indians without moving on to say that Americans should all begin acting like Navaho Indians, practicing their sex ethics, living in hogans, and so on.

Speaking as *students of anthropology,* the doctors discussed the development of sexual taboos. This part of their conversation may also prove interesting to parents. They pointed out the opinion that the development of sexual taboos has followed the development of cities, mercantile relationships, money, and property. In some simple, rural societies, oriented to farm rather than to town or city, they found that an illegitimate child was not treated as a catastrophe. The parents of the pregnant daughter simply hope that the child will be a boy and thus be useful in the work of the family. Fear over illegitimate children, according to this opinion, arises in situations where there will be inheritance problems.

Anthropological insights, however, are rarely transferable. The point for parents to see is that there are strong and good reasons for the ethical sanctions in our society regarding sexual activity. Society approves sexual intercourse in monogamous marriage. A fully elaborated sanction is not the same thing as a taboo, which is a kind of fearful "don't touch that or you will be hurt or killed!" Parents should be alert to that difference and try to make the sanctions clear without treating them as primitive taboos.

In devoting themselves specifically to the contemporary teen-ager, generally ill-equipped by society and education to deal realistically with his sexual situation, the doctors found that parents are most worried about "the trouble" that *they* themselves might get into. Consequently, they seek to prevent trouble by verbal measures, such as "Don't," threats, and so on. The doctors cited impressive evidence to show the inadequacy of this approach. Parents interested in staying out of trouble themselves would do better to pay attention to the quality of their own relationships to each other and to the teen-ager instead of making loud prohibitions. When teen-agers enjoy a good relationship with their parents, a relationship characterized by mutual honesty and respect, they *will know* what the society believes in, what the parents believe in, and what consequences are apt to flow from various sorts of behavior.

Precisely because this relationship is the exception instead of the rule, the present-day teen-ager is confused, anxious, and ripe for exhibiting his parents' prime neurotic symptoms. The parent fears talking about sex with his children because he is worried that what he has to say will prove to be sexually stimulating. In such a situation, the parent is probably right. It would be sexually stimulating, because the parent would treat sex in a stimulating way. The teen-ager, therefore, is vulnerable to his urges and to his resentment over restrictions he has not been led to understand or accept. Changing the culture might help the teen-ager, but that is a job that psychiatry is neither prepared nor equipped to perform. Psychiatry deals with those who have been crippled by the culture (church, school, and home). Preventive measures have to be undertaken by the culture itself, and particularly by the parents in the culture.

The doctors found little reason to hope that the church will play an active role in helping the teen-ager or his parent. Out of their own experience with all sorts of ill people, the members of this group have found the church to be more often than not an unwitting contributor to the illness.

Perhaps they did not understand that precisely the parents who ultimately will be benefited by their conversation are meeting in the adult groups they specified to be helpful, discussing, it is hoped, their own relationships and attitudes in such a way that they can raise this generation of teen-agers into healthy adulthood. Many churchmen would be glad to have a church that is fundamentally not so interested in restriction as it is in the health, goodness, and dignity of the shared life of the people of God.

DISCUSSION LEADS FOR TOPIC 1

Before the Discussion

The psychiatrists' conversation among themselves began with a consideration of an episode from a recent novel. In the episode under discussion a mother is questioning her daughter about her sexual activities while dating a local boy. The girl admits that she has had intercourse with the boy and then goes on to tell her mother that the whole town knows that the bread man has been stopping at their house and suspects that the bread man is having an affair with Mother.

The conversation, therefore, dealt with the hypocrisy of the adult community in hiding its own promiscuity and at the same time condemning the teen-ager for his sexual activities. The psychiatrists also pointed out that the promiscuous girl was a neglected teen-ager who had acted out her resentment and her mother's unconscious wishes.

The psychiatrists pointed out the great difficulties that exist for teen-agers because (1) they have strong biological urges; (2) the society prohibits satisfactory fulfillment of the urges; (3) parents do not help the teen-agers to understand and accept or understand and reject the prohibitions; (4) therefore teen-agers are often guilt-ridden, worried, embarrassed, exhibiting telltale signs of illness that will later have to be dealt with in them and possibly in their children.

They see hope in the changing patterns of American life. They are concerned that the rigid authoritarian stand taken by the church and by too many parents in the church does more harm than good, because the teen-ager hears the "no" more acutely than he hears any sympathetic presentation of the case by understanding parents. As a matter of fact, they suspect that most parents have difficulty in talking honestly with their children about sex because the parents themselves are mixed up on the subject.

No matter if the parents in the group spend the whole discussion period in negative appraisal of the article; the actual fact that they will have discussed the sexual problems of adolescence in public will in itself be significant. Your role might be that of keeping the subject in focus: the teen-ager in trouble represents a troubled parent and a troubled adult world. Thus, without necessarily defending the article, keep attention on the relationships between a particular teen-ager and his parents and between parent and parent.

Note: You could well begin the discussion where the psychiatrists did, namely, the episode from the novel.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the incidence of antemarital pregnancy in your community? church? What is this a sign of?

2. Discuss the doctors' contention that behind the teen-agers' difficulties today stand troubled parents and a troubled culture.

3. Is the church a part of the trouble or a part of the cure? In what sense? What criteria are you using as a basis for your answer?

4. Do you have serious objections to the style of life adopted by Marshall Islanders? Would it work in America?

5. Recall your own adolescence, your friends, and the general views on antemarital sexual experiences. Have the times changed?

6. Should parents openly discuss the problems concerning sexual urge and social and spiritual prohibitions as they occur in adult life? Can discussion help the shaky relationships between adults and teen-agers of today?

7. Why does the church stand firmly for prohibition of all sexual relationships outside marriage? After considering the reasons, discuss whether or not a teen-ager could understand and accept them.

For Further Reading

1. *Sexual Pleasure in Marriage,* by Jerome and Julia Rainer (Julian Messner, Inc., $4.95). For parents to read and discuss among themselves.

2. *The Mystery of Love and Marriage,* by Derrick S. Bailey (Harper & Brothers, $2.00).

3. *Facts of Life and Love for Teen-Agers* (New Revised Edition), by Evelyn Millis Duvall (Popular Library, paperback, 35 cents).

Love Myths in Songs

By Cornelius Loew

How significant are the words of popular songs? Recently I conducted an informal poll among students in a college coffee shop. While above the din of clinking dishes and busy conversations rose the thump-thump-thump of the jukebox, I asked the same questions again and again: "What do you spend your money for when you 'feed' the jukebox? Do you want to hear a certain tune, a favorite singer, a particular orchestra, the words of the song, or what?"

Some students answered that they make their choices on the basis of tunes most of the time. Many said that as long as Perry Como or the Four Aces or Georgia Gibbs sings a song, they like it, regardless of words or music. Others referred to special gimmicks like echo chambers, rhythmic effects, and unusual combinations of instruments as reasons why they enjoy certain records.

Only one student considered the words of a current song hit the main reason for her interest in it. Apparently lyrics are not very significant.

Think of what happens to the hundreds of popular

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songs that are published by Tin Pan Alley every year. Even those which ride the hit parade for several months soon become material for purely orchestral arrangements featured by Mantovani, André Kostelanetz, and other mood-music conductors.

Sales of this type of music-without-words recordings have been tremendous since high fidelity and LP came along a few years ago. Radio stations play a great deal of such music during the dinner hour. How many times do the tunes we hear call up in our memories anything more than song titles?

Yet from another point of view these lyrics are very significant. The words of any one song may not be memorable, but that does not matter, because the same hackneyed phrases are repeated innumerable times in the songs that keep appearing in endless succession. The main subject of most popular songs remains the same, year in and year out. It is the theme of sex and romantic love.

Both words and music celebrate this theme, and in doing so they communicate to the listener certain ideas and attitudes about love. They describe what it means to fall in love, what love is like, what individuals can expect to get out of it.

Students *are* extremely interested in sex and romantic love. Therefore, when they tell me that they do not pay much attention to the words of their favorite jukebox selections, I suspect that this does not mean that the lyrics make no impact on them. Perhaps their answers reflect the fact that the words express conventional ideas about love which are so congenial to modern young people that they take them for granted. If this is true, then the words of the songs that gain favor among students may be significant precisely because they pay very little attention to them!

But do we not hear and sing hymns in church sometimes without concentrating on the meaning of the words? Does this indicate that the words are unimportant to us? Sometimes, undoubtedly, but not always. The hymns we like best are linked up closely to our religious experience. They articulate feelings and attitudes and convictions about the faith we practice that we are scarcely conscious of having.

Thus we can sing hymns sincerely or be deeply moved when we hear them, even though we do not follow the words closely. They "speak" to us because we have already taken their message for granted. I am suggesting that this happens in the field of popular love songs, and that one of the ways, therefore, in which we may gain insight into what is going on inside the minds of our young people is to study the songs they like.

What ideas and attitudes concerning love do popular songs communicate? In many forms, with countless variations, and in many settings, these songs repeat the great American fairy tale of love. Or if they do not actually repeat it, they appeal to it as a part of our folklore. Evelyn Millis Duvall has summarized the fairy tale in six steps: [1]

"**Step 1.** Nothing much had ever happened to her. She had been living a life of innocent waiting, doing her schoolwork, being nice to her mother, helping with the dishes, and washing her hair on Saturday night. She was sweet and winsome and entirely undiscovered until—

"**Step 2.** Suddenly *he* appeared. He knew at once that *she* was for *him*. He saw her across the room and said to himself, 'I'm going to marry that girl.' He was all that she had ever dreamed of—tall, dark, handsome, . . . and so—

"**Step 3.** They *fell* in love. Completely, utterly, suddenly in love. One minute she was alone in the world, an unclaimed treasure; the next, she was madly in love. Before he entered that room he was adrift, no one to tie to, no good woman to keep him from going to the dogs; the next, there she was. So naturally—

"**Step 4.** They met and kissed and knew they were made for each other. What they did those first few minutes, those first days and weeks, did not matter except that they were together. Even if there had been any question about their love before, when at last he kissed her, all doubts flew and she sighed, 'Oh, darling!' with all her heart. Then, of course, there is no alternative but that—

"**Step 5.** They marry as soon as they can, for this is the real thing. Love is all that matters. Out of all the world there is one man for one woman, and when they are brought together by the hand of Fate, they must obey and marry before it is too late. The ending of the story is always the same—

"**Step 6.** And they lived happily ever after. Their marriage was built on real love; so of course they will live happily ever after. If they run into trouble, then it could not have been real love after all. The real thing ends only in permanent bliss, a lifetime of sweethearts together, with never a cross word, never a dull moment, only the never-ending thrill of belonging to each other."

This is a sweet story, and practically all of us like it in spite of ourselves because it is so familiar and so satisfying. But it is fiction rather than fact, dream rather than reality.

Several years ago a professional expert in the field of semantics (the historical and psychological study of changes in the meaning of words), Prof. Samuel Hayakawa, of San Francisco State College, devoted some time to a careful analysis of the word content of popular songs. An enthusiastic jazz fan, Professor Hayakawa was first of all impressed by the contrast between the words of Negro blues songs and those of the usual popular songs. *Time* magazine quoted him on this subject: [2]

[1] From *Facts of Life and Love for Teen-Agers* (New Revised Edition), by Evelyn Millis Duvall. Association Press. Copyright © 1956 by National Board of Young Men's Christian Associations. Used by permission.

[2] Courtesy *Time;* copyright Time Inc. 1954.

"The words of true jazz songs, especially the Negro blues, tend to be highly realistic and unsentimental in their statements about life. The words of popular songs, . . . pretty much the product of white song writers for white audiences, are full of wishful thinking, dreamy and ineffectual nostalgia, unrealistic fantasy, self-pity, and sentimental clichés masquerading as emotion."

Time became interested in the professor because he prepared a paper on the words of popular songs which he read at a conference attended by fellow-expert semanticists. In this lecture he charged that the lyrics of most popular love songs spread a psychological disorder which he labeled "the IFD disease." The letters IFD stand for *Idealization* (making impossibly ideal demands on life), *Frustration* (feeling blocked and powerless when Idealization's demands are not met), and *Demoralization* (retreating into self-pity, despair, and isolation from creative human relationships). According to Dr. Hayakawa, in the area of relations between the sexes, Tin Pan Alley breeds IFD germs as fast as swamps breed mosquitoes.

To quote again: "First, there is an enormous amount of idealization, the creation of a wishful dream girl or dream boy, the fleshly counterpart of which never existed on earth. Then, of course, one meets a young person of the other sex, and a tremendous amount of projection begins. Love is depicted in most white popular songs as . . . magic. There is never an indication . . . that, having found the dream girl or dream man, one's problems are just beginning. Rather, having found one's ideal, all problems are forever solved. The unrealistic expectations then bring on disappointment, disenchantment, frustration, and most importantly, self-pity. Next comes the demoralization or despair." [2]

So much for professional semantic analysis. It would be interesting to test this interpretation by studying the hundreds of songs considered promising enough by music publishers during a particular year to be worth the cost of printing them. We are in no position to do such a thorough job, but let us take a "spot check" by looking at the hit songs which were most successful during 1955. (This is recent enough to be contemporary, but far enough in the past that we can view the "hits" of that year with detachment.)

Three of the most successful love songs in 1955 were "Only You," "I Hear You Knocking," and "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing." Each of them ranked among the top ten hits for more than three months, which is a long time, considering the mortality rate of popular songs. The first two are excellent examples of Idealization and Frustration.

The words of "Only You" go like this:

"Only you can make this world seem right.
Only you can make the darkness bright.
Only you and you alone can thrill me like you do
and fill my heart with love for only you.
Only you can make this change in me,
for it's true you are my destiny.
When you hold my hand, I understand the magic
that you do.
You're my dream come true, my one and only
you."

Copyright by Wildwood Music, Inc., 1954, 1955.

There really is no need for comment. The "great American fairy tale of love" shines through every line of the poem.

In contrast, "I Hear You Knocking" illustrates what happens when the "one and only you" starts playing around with another "one and only." Anger, resentment, wounded pride, follow in the wake of the discovery that the dream man or dream woman is only too human. Idealization gives way to Frustration. (The one who knocks is denied entrance because of his unfaithfulness in love.)

For the purposes of our discussion the most significant of the three songs is "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing," because it attempts to define the conception of love that underlies the dreams and attitudes and expectations which so many popular songs express. It combines phrases about the loveliness of nature in springtime with lines on an early-morning rendezvous between two lovers.

With surprising brevity, this song embraces the whole idea that the ultimate meaning of the universe is somehow caught up in an affair between two who are in love.

What is "true love"? Both music and words tell us that love is a terrific experience, a climactic revelation of the "reason to be living." But perhaps the most telling symbolism in the lyric is the phrase "once on a high and windy hill," which suggests that love is an ecstatic, overwhelming passion that carries lovers far above the details and responsibilities of ordinary living. The "world" stands still. This *experience* is the "golden crown that makes a man a king"—and a woman a queen! Everything else is secondary.

This conception of love as primarily intense sexual attraction stands in strange contradiction to stable marriage relationships. Recently I read a letter in the daily paper which illustrates the implications of this conception vividly. I do not know whether the two lovers referred to in the letter kissed "on a high and windy hill" in the morning mist, but it is obvious that although they may feel that their passion is "splendid," the situation contains much that is not at all splendid. The writer addressed a columnist who edits a question-and-answer column called "Your Problems":

Dear _____:

I'm a college graduate in my middle 20's and the father of three children. My wife and I have had the usual number of spats, and our life together is something less than perfect. However, I was somewhat con-

tent until I met an attractive woman and we fell madly in love. . . . Since I have no great love for my wife, do you think it would be wrong to be divorced and find bliss with my new romance? I can afford to give my children the best of everything and care for them in style. My friends would probably criticize me, yet I feel my life is my own and I should enjoy it. Am I right?

The columnist told the young man that he was out of his mind. But is this fair? Our culture teaches young people that marriage ought to be based on love. At the same time, it idealizes a type of erotic attraction and teaches that this experience is so important that when it "strikes," everything else must get out of the way. In effect, we encourage our youth to build marriage on a kind of love that definitely is a threat to marriage.

Curiously enough, among students actual sex relations often are talked about and practiced in a casual and commonplace way. A coed reports, for instance, that many of her fellow students virtually look upon sex relations during a date as no more significant than a good-night kiss. A male student defends premarital sex relations on the grounds that "if you buy a pair of shoes, you try them on first to see if they fit."

Another takes the position that intercourse simply relieves physical tension in a pleasurable way and that therefore it is quite innocent. When a girl disappears from school and the word gets around that she is pregnant, the reaction of many students is, "Why wasn't she more careful?"

Yet, hidden beneath this sophisticated, casual approach to sex, the secret hope persists that somewhere, sometime, with someone, the miracle of perfect passionate love will occur. The great American fairy tale continues to weave its spell, and one of the channels through which it steals into the desires and expectations of young people is popular music.

The fact that hit songs are one of the means by which our culture communicates some terrible lies about life to our youth does not mean that we ought to start a campaign against hit songs. It would not get very far; and, anyway, the issue for Christian parents goes far beyond popular music. Our whole culture is permeated with unfortunate and dangerous misconceptions concerning love and marriage. How can we combat and counteract the seductive, exciting appeal of these illusions and lies?

At the very least, we owe to our young people some of the plain facts of life and love. Social scientists have been building up a body of tested knowledge in the area of relations between the sexes. Their research into factors that make for success and failure in marriage offers sober and thought-provoking data.

For instance, they tell us that we do not "fall" in love, that "love at first sight" is mostly fairy tale. Actually, we *learn* to love, and this learning is a constant ongoing process after people are married. The social scientists provide much evidence that attraction and affection ought not to be confused with each other. Attraction often is sudden, impulsive, and fragile; affection grows out of mutual association and is based on much more than sex. Sexual desire tends to be vagrant and adulterous; mature love disciplines desire by fidelity, by faithfulness to the one person with whom life is shared.

The social scientists also point out that love is not something that necessarily comes only once in a lifetime. Any person who is capable of loving another individual has the capacity of loving more than once. This leads to another unromantic fact, namely, that for any normal man or woman there are many possible partners with whom a fine marriage could be worked out.

Young people who have been exposed to such insights as the above may seem completely unimpressed as they cling firmly to the seductive promises of the American fairy tale. But what is rejected is not necessarily forgotten. What is rejected today may be drawn upon tomorrow, when illusions and myths that could not be relinquished are finally shattered.

DISCUSSION LEADS FOR TOPIC 2

Before the Discussion

As parents, we have probably been aware of the fairy-story content of popular songs. But we may not have realized that the fairy story is actually damaging. This is the central point of the article. The popular song gives a life view to young people that they find more acceptable than the life view held by parents or by the more responsible elements in society. When the fairy story has to give way to hard facts, as it eventually must, the young people have little or no preparation for dealing with life as it is—aside from fairy stories. The author suggests, therefore, that parents seek to prepare their children and adolescents to accept the life realities and move on into adulthood.

In terms of discussion value, these points seem to have the greatest potential: (1) Parents were once adolescents themselves and thus can compare the power of the popular song in their day to the power Mr. Loew attributes to the popular song today. (2) Adolescents may vary in their choice of popular songs, but there are some songs that are chosen by all—that seem to be affiliated with "IFD." (3) The culture seems to have more influence on young people than parents, church, and school, which leads to a suspicion that parents, church, and school may inadvertently reinforce culture, even if they are verbally against it. Do parents, for instance, still hold onto the fairy story—secretly?

Carrying off this kind of discussion could be made easier if some popular-song evidence is on hand. Perhaps the

leader might consult some teen-agers before the session, learn from them what songs are popular currently, and then make the words available to the group for examination and discussion.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Which popular songs do you remember from your youth? Why? Are these songs similar or dissimilar to the songs that are popular now? Were you, as a youth, as impressionable about the content of songs as the teen-ager of today appears to be?

2. Consider the possibility that IFD is a communicable disease. Are there known inoculations against it? Is it a terrible disease or merely a part of growing up?

3. Do you think that parents should be more, less, or as alarmed as Mr. Loew about the love myths in popular songs?

4. Reread the last section of the article, which deals with the plain *facts* of life and love. Are these all the facts? Are *they* the facts? How can the teen-ager distinguish between what he considers to be the facts (the myth) and the facts that you as a parent present, which he considers to be a myth?

5. Should parents guide, and consequently judge, teen-agers in their choice of popular songs? Can they? What criteria should parents employ? Is it a *musical* matter so much as it is a romantic matter? Can parents, for instance, who are ignorant of the jazz medium give wise musical counsel to a teen-ager who knows more about the subject than they do?

FOR FURTHER READING

"Popular Songs vs. the Facts of Life," by S. I. Hayakawa, and "Listening to Popular Music," by David Riesman, in *Mass Culture*, edited by Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White (The Free Press; $6.50).

Facts of Life and Love for Teen-Agers (New Revised Edition), by Evelyn Millis Duvall (Popular Library, paperback, 35 cents).

Jazz, edited by Nat Hentoff and A. J. McCarthy (Rinehart & Company, Inc., $5.95).

The Defense of Chastity

By William Hamilton

We have had two articles on the cultural problem of teen-agers who have biological sexual urges on the one hand and confused, heavy-handed prohibitions on the other hand. This article will help parents and teen-agers learn what it means to be a human being—that is, in an explicitly Christian perspective. See what you think of it.

LET us suggest three different approaches that might be used in a defense of chastity. To be useful for our purposes they must presuppose a realistic understanding of the nature of sex and be grounded in the Christian understanding of man.

1. *Sexual intercourse is an act of union in which each participant does something to the other.* This is what Paul meant when he declared that "he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her" (*I Cor. 6: 16*). Dr. D. S. Bailey, in a very valuable book on this whole subject, spells out the meaning of this Pauline statement:

"Whenever a man and a woman enter freely into sexual relation, the principle holds good; their intercourse always makes them in some sense 'one flesh.' . . . Sexual intercourse is an act of the whole self which affects the whole self; it is a personal encounter between man and woman in which each does something to the other, for good or for ill, which can never be obliterated. This remains true even when they are ignorant of the radical character of their act." [1]

Our first line of argument, then, starts with Paul's realistic estimate of the effect of the sexual relationship on the participants. This is an act, a doing of something. It is not merely a case of the acting male and the passive female; both are actively involved. Further, it is not merely an abstract doing of something; it is a doing of something *to another person.* The result of this most personal of all possible relations, as Paul reminds us, is union: two become one—one body, or one flesh. Every married couple knows something of this obliteration of the distinction between "you" and "me" in married love in general, and in sexual experience in particular.

Paul's further point here is that intercourse involves union even when the personal relationship between the participants is not taken seriously, even in casual and promiscuous sex. Union takes place quite apart from the personal attitudes of those involved. So, whether one likes it or wills it or not, sexual intercourse binds one to the other in an irrevocable way. The very act does an indelible thing; the future cannot blot it out.

Now what does all this enable us to say about premarital chastity? If sexual intercourse involves this union in one flesh, the act becomes dishonest if the union thus symbolized cannot be extended in all the areas of responsible life together. As Paul says, a man going to a prostitute becomes one flesh with her. But this is an egoistic, irresponsible, and incomplete kind of union. In it the man is actually saying that this

THIS ARTICLE is reprinted from *The Christian Man*, by William Hamilton. Layman's Theological Library, The Westminster Press. Copyright 1956 by W. L. Jenkins.

[1] From *The Mystery of Love and Marriage*. Harper & Brothers. 1952.

union is not one that he is willing to carry through. He wants the pleasure without the consequences. So when the sexual act is entered into outside of marriage, it actually expresses more than either party feels. This is one of the sources of the guilt of the sexual libertine; the sexual act "acts out" real union, but the words and intentions of the persons involved deny it. And when gestures and acts begin to "say" more than inner intentions, and when this kind of self-deception continues for an extended period of time, something like disintegration of the personality can set in.

To sum up: Sexual intercourse is an act of union in which each person does something irrevocable and permanent to the other. Being an act of union, it can appropriately be engaged in only within marriage, where the actual structure and responsibilities of that union can be worked out and accepted. Only in marriage can this terrifying and demanding experience of union with another person be received and given without fear and guilt. To be the occasion for self-hatred, fear, and guilt in another is often the result of what at first sight seems only a physical act of promiscuity. Promiscuity is a profoundly spiritual act because in violating a person's dignity it can obscure the relation of that person to God. Sexual intercourse is a personal act that, often apart from our intentions, does something. It is strange, but in one set of circumstances—within marriage—it can affirm and enforce a deeply Christian attitude to human nature; in other circumstances the very same act can deeply violate that attitude.

2. *Sexual intercourse involves a kind of knowledge about ourselves and about the other person that can be communicated in no other way.*

This does not mean, of course, that some kind of objective information is communicated through sex. Perhaps a distinction between *scientific* and *personal* knowledge should be made. It is the latter kind we are concerned about here.

Let us imagine that a pretty girl moves into the neighborhood. She is in high school, and on either side of her live boys of the same age. How does each get to know her? One, let us say, begins to collect all the information about her that he can find: height, weight, former residence, and the like—all this without actually talking to her. It would be perfectly possible for him to collect quite a dossier of facts without speaking to the girl at all. And he would have, at the end of such a search, a kind of knowledge about her.

The other boy is not interested in this kind of knowledge at all. He goes next door, rings the bell, introduces himself, and in five minutes of conversation he really "knows" the new girl better than his scholarly friend ever will. The first was dealing with scientific knowledge, the second with personal knowledge: not simply knowledge *about* a person, but knowledge *of* a person. It is with this second kind that we are here concerned. In what way, then, can sexual intercourse be said to involve an exchange of this kind of personal knowledge?

The simplest way of stating it is this: In the sexual act we come to know what it means to be a man (or a woman) and we also help the other discover what it means to be a woman (or a man). We discover, for the first time in a decisive way, the meaning of our sexuality. The uneasiness, suspicion, mystery, and sometimes fear, that attend much of the sexual side of adolescent and young adult life—this is banished by sexual intercourse. We know ourselves in a new way.

And, just as important, we know the other in a way we have never known another person before. Not new information; but insight into the deepest center of his or her life—what it really means to be a man or a woman. We know ourselves, here, when we learn to give ourselves; and we know the other when he or she gives himself or herself completely to us. Surely there is a kind of knowledge or insight here that is possible in no other way.

Now if it is true that sexual intercourse mediates a unique kind of personal knowledge, it is clear that a very special status must be given to the first experience of the sexual act. While, in a marriage, new things are always being learned about the other by a couple truly in love, it is also true that a decisive importance must be attached to the first time this mutual and intimate knowledge was ever shared. A man, for example, would seem to be bound in an irrevocable way—because of this interchange of knowledge—to the woman who first helped him understand himself as a man. Whether that woman was a prostitute years before his wedding, or his wife on their wedding night, the first encounter has a unique effect.

This seems to point to a strong argument for premarital chastity. The first sexual experience is so overwhelming and so different from any other experience that it is better reserved as a means of symbolizing and giving meaning to marriage. If man is bound in a permanent way to the first woman who shows him what it means to be a man, this is a strong reason for defining the sexual act as one that is possible, at its best, only within marriage.

3. *Sexual intercourse is a symbol of a relationship. Because of its nature, it can be an appropriate symbol only of a relationship within marriage.* That is the conclusion. Now let us see how it can be justified.

Sexual intercourse is not only a means of procreation, but also an act that can express or symbolize a particular sort of relationship between a man and a woman. We will need to clarify the phrase "appropriate symbol" first. If, having met you casually, I were later to meet you in Grand Central Station and throw my arms warmly around you, this embrace would rightly seem to you to be an inappropriate symbol of our relationship. Our actual relationship, being only a very casual sort of acquaintance, is not rightly depicted

by my enthusiastic embrace. My gesture "says" more than our relationship warrants.

On the other hand, if I have been away from home for several weeks and on returning meet my wife at the front door with a cool how-do-you-do and a brisk handshake, that too is an inappropriate symbol of the relationship. In this case the gesture says far too *little*, expresses far less than the actual relationship itself means.

In other words, all of our physical acts and gestures carry a kind of built-in meaning, independent of the words we speak along with them. This is supremely true of sexual intercourse, which can express only a certain sort of relationship.

So we must look very carefully at the sexual act itself and ask of it, Precisely what does this gesture express, what does it symbolize? Doesn't it portray a most complete and radical kind of self-giving—complete commitment of one to the other, concern only for the other and not for the self? Humility, trust, selflessness—these are all surely implied in the act. Therefore, unless the act is entered into with the inner intent to show forth something of this humility, trust, and selflessness, it is inappropriately and dangerously used.

It can be claimed that marriage is the only social structure we know within which this symbolic act can be used. The act expresses too much mutuality, self-giving, interdependence to be appropriately used apart from marriage. Because it does symbolize or say all these things, when it is used apart from the marriage, the participants know it is dishonestly used. The fear and guilt and shame that can spring from this kind of dishonesty can affect their personalities very profoundly indeed. Marriage is the only man-woman relationship that is able to contain the powerful meanings of the sexual act without injuring the characters of the participants. In marriage alone can we honestly verbalize all the depth in the man-woman relationship that the sexual act symbolizes in gesture.

Thus, the symbolism of the sexual act requires the limitation of that act to marriage.

DISCUSSION LEADS FOR TOPIC 3

Before the Discussion

After discussing the previous articles, this one is bound to have two centers of interest for the group. First of all, because it identifies an explicitly Christian position on sexual intercourse, it can be looked at in terms of its usefulness for sharing with teen-agers. Although society demands through law and custom that sexual intercourse be restricted to marriage —and one marriage at a time—society has not done a particularly creditable job in making its demands clear. Parents, as a part of society, must share a part of this blame. Mr. Hamilton's statement presents the position clearly. He wants to present a view so that others will be attracted to accept it. Therefore, parents will be looking at the article in partially utilitarian terms. How can I share this with my teen-ager, or my child who will one day be a teen-ager?

But the article will also be interesting on a second count: It defines for parents a set of attitudes toward sexual intercourse. Using Mr. Hamilton's expressions, parents will treat the article as personal knowledge of themselves as persons, as well as scientific knowledge about other persons, particularly their own youngsters.

The article may prove interesting in yet another way: It can be used to back up, to evaluate, the previous two articles. These articles help us to see the problem—that teen-agers have powerful urges, but no socially acceptable ways of fulfilling these urges. How does this article help to re-evaluate the problem?

Parents, for instance, may be led to see that the problem is specific. Even perpetually solving the problem does not really *solve* it. Mr. Hamilton's article helps us get some perspective, and this is precisely what teen-agers don't have and don't want. Life goes on for a considerable number of years after adolescence. Marriage and sexual relations will probably occupy most of those years. There is plenty of time. Living as the human beings that we were created to be demands that one exercise patience (even if it may be a suffering patience), willingly wait to become one flesh with one person who has become the only person.

Perhaps it will be hard to muster discussion on this subject. If you attempt to focus attention on one area of interest—the relevance of the article to teen-agers, you probably will be helping the group to deal with the matters that are closest to the concerns of this quarter's material. Most of the questions are framed with this relevance in mind. Questions 5 and 6 are designed to help you get discussion into other areas, if there is group willingness to go into them.

Questions for Discussion

1. Evaluate the three lines of argument taken by Mr. Hamilton. Imagine that a teen-ager was listening to your evaluation. Would he be interested? bored? impressed? puzzled? helped?

2. Considering the evidence proposed by many experts, adolescents today are more *openly* promiscuous than the adolescents of another day. Does this mean that they do not agree with the position Mr. Hamilton outlines or that they have never heard of it?

3. In the last session, parents were asked to spell out a position that they might take in talking with teen-agers. How does that position compare with this article? How would you now state your position?

4. Many critics of the Christian position on chastity point out that this position is no more than a religious cover for sexual taboos and for the social *status quo*. They contend that God doesn't care as much about chastity as society does. How would you answer these critics? Use the article or any other resource in your answer; or do you agree with the critics?

5. Does the Christian position on chastity apply to everyone or just to Christians?

6. The article says, "Sexual intercourse is a symbol of a relationship."

What does the word "symbol" mean here? Can we say that a relationship is a symbol of sexual intercourse? Are deep nonsexual relationships possible with anyone? Or is marriage the *only* deep relationship possible because it is sexual?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Christian Round Table unit on "Courtship," by William Graham Cole, in *Crossroads,* Jan.–March, 1958.

Sex and Love in the Bible, by William Graham Cole (Association Press, $6.50).

The Christian Man, by William Hamilton (Layman's Theological Library, The Westminster Press, $1.00). See especially Chs. 7, 8, and 9, in addition to Ch. 10, reprinted above.

Youth in the Organized Society

By Paul Goodman

IT'S hard to grow up when there isn't enough man's work. There is "nearly full employment" (with highly significant exceptions), but there get to be fewer jobs that are necessary or unquestionably useful; that require energy and draw on some of one's best capacities; and that can be done keeping one's honor and dignity. In explaining the widespread troubles of adolescents and young men, this simple objective factor is not much mentioned. Let us here insist on it.

By man's work I mean a very simple idea, so simple that it is clearer to ingenuous boys than to most adults. To produce necessary food and shelter is man's work. During most of economic history most men have done this drudging work, secure that it was justified and worthy of a man to do it, though often feeling that the social conditions under which they did it were *not* worthy of a man, thinking, "It's better to die than to live so hard"—but they worked on. When the environment has been forbidding, as in wresting a living in the Swiss Alps or the Aran Islands, we regard such work with poetic awe. In emergencies it is heroic, as when the bakers of Paris maintained the supply of bread during the French Revolution, or the milkman did not miss a day's delivery when the bombs recently tore up London.

At present there is little such subsistence work. Let us guess that one twentieth of our economy is devoted to it. Production of food is actively discouraged. Farmers are not wanted, and the young men go elsewhere. (The farm population is now less than 20 per cent.) Building, on the contrary, is immensely needed. One would think that ambitious boys would flock to this work. Here we find that building, too, is discouraged. In the great city of New York now for twenty years hundreds of thousands are ill-housed, yet we do not see that science, industry, and labor are enthusiastically enlisted for the quick solution of this definite problem. The promoters are interested in long-term investments, the real estate men in speculation, the city planners in votes and graft. The building craftsmen cannily see to it that their own numbers remain few, their methods antiquated, and their rewards high. Nobody is much interested in providing shelter, and nobody is at all interested in providing new manly jobs.

Once we turn away from the absolutely necessary subsistence jobs, however, we find that an enormous proportion of our production is not even unquestionably useful. Everybody knows and also feels this, and there has recently been a flood of books about our surfeit of honey, our insolent chariots, and the follies of ex-urban ranch houses, our hucksters and our synthetic demand. Many acute things are said about this useless production and advertising, but not much about the workmen producing it and their frame of mind; and nothing at all, so far as I have noticed, about the plight of a young fellow looking for a manly occupation. The eloquent critics of the American way of life have themselves been so seduced by it that they think only in terms of selling commodities and point out that the goods are valueless; but they fail to see that people are being wasted and their skills insulted. . . .

What is strange about it? American society has tried so hard and so ably to defend the practice and theory of production for profit and not primarily for use, that now it has succeeded in making its jobs and products profitable and useless.

Consider a likely useful job. A youth who is alert and willing but not "verbally intelligent"—perhaps he has quit high school at the eleventh grade (the median), as soon as he legally could—chooses for auto mechanic. That's a good job, familiar to him, he often watched . . . as a kid. It's careful and dirty at the same time. In a small garage it's sociable; one can talk to the customers (girls). You please people in trouble by fixing their cars, and a man is proud to see rolling out on its own the car that limped in behind the tow truck. The pay is as good as the next fellow's, who is respected.

So our young man takes this first-rate job. But what when he then learns that the cars have a built-in obsolescence, that the manufacturers do not want them to be repaired or repairable? They have lobbied a law

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that requires them to provide spare parts for only five years (it used to be ten). Repairing the new cars is a matter of cosmetics, not mechanics; and the repairs are pointlessly expensive—a tail fin might cost $150. The insurance rates therefore double and treble on old and new cars both. Gone are the days of keeping jalopies in good shape, the artist work of a proud mechanic. But everybody is paying for foolishness, for in fact the new models are only trivially superior; the whole thing is a sell.

It is hard for the young man now to maintain his feelings of justification, sociability, serviceability. It is not surprising if he quickly becomes cynical and timeserving, interested in a fast buck. . . .

There is a hypothesis that an important predisposition to juvenile delinquency is the combination of low verbal intelligence with high manual intelligence, delinquency giving a way of self-expression where other avenues are blocked by lack of schooling. A lad so endowed might well apply himself to the useful trade of mechanic.

Most manual jobs do not lend themselves so readily to knowing the facts and fraudulently taking advantage. In factory jobs the workman is likely to be ignorant of what goes on, since he performs a small operation on a big machine that he does not understand. Even so there is evidence that he has the same disbelief in the enterprise as a whole, with a resulting attitude of profound indifference. . . .

Let us go on to the occupational outlook of those who are verbally bright. Among this group, just because they cannot help asking more general questions, the problem of finding man's work is harder and their disillusion more poignant. The more intelligent worker's "indifference" is likely to appear more nakedly as profound resignation, and his cynicism may sharpen to outright racketeering.

"Teaching," says the [U. S. Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook 1957*], "is the largest of the professions." So suppose our now verbally bright young man chooses for teacher, in the high school system or, by exception, in the elementary schools if he understands that these are the vitally important grades and require the most ability to teach well (and of course have less prestige). Teaching is necessary and useful work; it is real and creative, for it directly confronts an important subject matter, the children themselves; it is obviously self-justifying; and it is ennobled by the arts and sciences. Those who practice teaching do not for the most part succumb to cynicism or indifference—the children are too immediate and real for the teachers to become callous—but they certainly come to suffer first despair and then deep resignation. Resignation occurs psychologically as follows: frustrated in essential action, they nevertheless cannot quit in anger, because the task is necessary; so the anger turns inward and is felt as resignation.

For the job is carried on in impossible conditions of overcrowding and saving public money. *Not* that there is not enough social wealth, but first things are not put first. Also, the school system has spurious aims. It soon becomes clear that the underlying aims are to relieve the home and keep the kids quiet; or, suddenly, the aim is to produce physicists. Timid supervisors, bigoted clerics, and ignorant school boards forbid real teaching. The emotional release and sexual expression of the children are taboo. A commercially debauched popular culture makes learning disesteemed. The academic curriculum is mangled by the demands of reactionaries, liberals, and demented warriors. Progressive methods are emasculated. Attention to each case is out of the question, and all the children—the bright, the average, and the dull—are systematically retarded one way or another, while the teacher's hands are tied. Naturally the pay is low—for the work is hard, useful, and of public concern, all three of which categories tend to get lower pay. It is alleged that the low pay is why there is a shortage of teachers and why the best do not choose the profession. My guess is that the best avoid it because of the certainty of mis-educating. Nor are the best *wanted* by the system, for they are not safe. Bertrand Russell was rejected by New York's City College and would not have been accepted in a New York grade school.

Next, what happens to the verbally bright who have no zeal for a serviceable profession and who have no particular scientific or artistic bent? For the most part, they make up the tribes of salesmanship, entertainment, business management, Madison Avenue. Here of course there is no question of utility or honor to begin with, so an ingenous boy will not look here for a manly career. Nevertheless, though we can pass by the sufferings of these well-paid callings, much publicized by their own writers, they are important to our theme because of the model they present to the growing boy.

Consider the men and women in TV advertisements, demonstrating the product and singing the jingle. They are clowns and mannequins, in grimace, speech, and action. And again, what I want to call attention to in this advertising is not the economic problem of synthetic demand, and not the cultural problem of Popular Culture, but the human problem that these are human beings working as clowns; that the writers and designers of it are human beings thinking like idiots; and the broadcasters and underwriters know and abet what goes on: *"Fruitily, bubbily, Hoffman's is dubbily good as good can be!"* Alternately, they are liars, confidence men, smooth talkers, obsequious, insolent, etc., etc. . . .

Thus, on the simple criteria of unquestioned utility, employing human capacities, and honor, there are not enough worthy jobs in our economy for average boys and adolescents to grow up toward. There are, of course, thousands of jobs that are worthy and self-justifying, and thousands that can be made so by stub-

born integrity. Extraordinary intelligence or special talent, also, can often carve out a place for itself—conversely, their usual corruption and waste are all the more sickening. But by and large our economic society is *not* geared for the cultivation of its young or the attainment of important goals that they can work toward.

This is evident from the usual kind of vocational guidance, which consists in measuring the boy and finding some place in the economy where he can be fitted, chopping him down to make him fit, or neglecting him if they can't find his slot. Personnel directors do not much try to scrutinize the economy in order to find some activity which is a real opportunity for the boy, and creating an opportunity if they can't find one. To do this would be a horrendous task; I am not sure if it could be done if we wanted to. But the question is whether anything less makes sense if we mean to speak seriously about the troubles of young men.

Surely by now, however, many readers are objecting that this entire argument is pointless because people in *fact* don't think of their jobs in this way at all. *Nobody* asks if a job is useful or honorable (within the limits of business ethics). A man gets a job that pays well, or well enough, that has prestige, and good conditions, or at least tolerable conditions. I agree with these objections as to the fact. (I hope that we are wrong.) *But the question is what it means to grow up into such a fact:* "During my productive years I will spend eight hours a day doing what is no good."

Yet economically and vocationally, a very large proportion of the young people are in a more drastic plight than anything so far mentioned. In our society as it is, there are not enough worthy jobs. But if our society, being at it is, were run more efficiently and soberly, for a majority there would soon not be any jobs at all. There is at present nearly full employment and there may be for some years, yet a vast number of young people are rationally unemployable, useless. This paradox is essential to explain their present temper.

Our society, which is not geared to the cultivation of its young, *is* geared to a profitable expanding production, a so-called high standard of living of mediocre value, and the maintenance of nearly full employment. Politically, the chief of these is full employment. In a crisis, when profitable production is temporarily curtailed, government spending increases and jobs are manufactured. In "normalcy"—a condition of slow boom—the easy credit, installment buying, and artificially induced demand for useless goods, create jobs for all and good profits for some.

Now back in the 30's when the New Deal attempted by hook or crook to put people back to work and give them money to revive the shattered economy, there was an outcry of moral indignation from the conservatives that many of the jobs were "boondoggling," useless made work. It was insisted, and rightly, that such work was demoralizing to the workers themselves. It is a question of a word, but a candid critic might certainly say that many of the jobs in our present "normal" production are useless made work. The tail fins and built-in obsolescence might be called boondoggling. The $64,000 Question and the busy hum of Madison Avenue might certainly be called boondoggling. Certain tax-dodge foundations are boondoggling. What of business lunches and expense accounts? fringe benefits? the comic categories of occupation in the building trades? the extra stagehands and musicians of the theater crafts? These jolly devices to put money back to work no doubt have a demoralizing effect on somebody or other (certainly on me, they make me green with envy), but where is the moral indignation from Top Management?

Suppose we would cut out the boondoggling and gear our society to a more sensible abundance, with efficient production of quality goods, distribution in a natural market, counterinflation, and sober credit. At once the work week would be cut to, say, twenty hours instead of forty. (Important people have already mentioned the figure thirty.) Or alternately, half the labor force would be unemployed. Suppose too—and how can we not suppose it?—that the automatic machines are put to general use, instead of just getting rid of badly organized unskilled labor. The unemployment will be still more drastic.

To give the most striking example: in steel, the annual increase in productivity is 4 per cent, the plants work at 50 per cent of capacity, and the companies can break even working at *less than 30 per cent* of capacity. These are the conditions that forced the steel strike as desperate self-protection. (Estes Kefauver, quoting Gardiner Means and Fred Gardner.)

Everybody knows this, nobody wants to talk about it much, for we don't know how to cope with it. The effect is that we are living a kind of lie. Long ago, labor used to fight for the shorter work week, but now they don't, because they are pretty sure they don't want it. Indeed, when hours are reduced, the tendency is to get a second, part-time, job and raise the standard of living, *because* the job is meaningless and one must have something; but the standard of living is pretty meaningless too. Nor is this strange atmosphere a new thing. For at least a generation the maximum sensible use of our productivity could have thrown a vast population out of work, or relieved everybody of a lot of useless work, depending on how you take it. (Consider with how little cutback of useful civilian production the economy produced the war goods and maintained an army of unemployed.) The plain truth is that at present very many of us are useless, not needed, rationally unemployable. It is in this paradoxical atmosphere that young persons grow up. It looks busy and expansive, but it is rationally at a stalemate. . . .

Let us sum up again. The majority of young people are faced with the following alternative: either society

is a benevolently frivolous racket in which they'll manage to boondoggle, though less profitably than the more privileged; or society is serious (and they hope still benevolent enough to support them), but they are useless and hopelessly out. Such thoughts do not encourage productive life. Naturally young people are more sanguine and look for man's work, but few find it. Some settle for a "good job"; most settle for a lousy job; a few, but an increasing number, don't settle.

I often ask: "What do you want to work at? If you have the chance. When you get out of school, college, the service, etc."

Some answer right off and tell their definite plans and projects. I'm pleased for them, but it's a bit boring, because they are such squares.

Quite a few will, with prompting, come out with astounding, stereotyped, conceited fantasies like being a movie actor when they are "discovered"—like "Marlon Brando, but in my own way."

Very rarely somebody will, maybe defiantly and defensively, maybe diffidently but proudly, make you know that he knows very well what he is going to do, is indeed already doing it, which is the real test.

The usual answer, perhaps the normal answer, is "I don't know," meaning, "I'm looking; I haven't found the right thing; it's discouraging but not hopeless."

But the terrible answer is, "Nothing." The young man doesn't want to do anything.

I remember talking to half a dozen young fellows at Van Wagner's Beach outside of Hamilton, Ontario; and all of them had this one thing to say, "Nothing." They didn't believe that what to work at was the kind of thing one *wanted*. They rather expected that two or three of them would work for the electric company in town, but they couldn't care less. I turned away from the conversation abruptly, because of the uncontrollable burning tears in my eyes and pain in my breast. Not feeling sorry for them, but tears of frank dismay for the waste of our humanity (they were nice kids). And it is out of that incident that many years later I am writing this report.

DISCUSSION LEADS FOR TOPIC 4

Before the Discussion

Mr. Goodman deals specifically with the human problem of a boy going into adult life with little likelihood that he will find real man's work. He sees this as a terrible prospect and attempts to alert the reader to some of its detailed aspects. Note that the author does not concern himself with suggestions for solutions and indeed hints that the lack of any decent solutions in our present situation is one of the facts that makes the problem so terrible.

Parents too easily slip into an old-time way of looking at employment, vocation, a job. They think in nineteenth-century terms about the twentieth-century world that they themselves have had to come to grips with. How can *they* creatively guide their children? What do *they* suggest to their teen-agers? Parents are, after all, vocational-guidance counselors de luxe. That is the point in considering this subject: to appraise parents of their task and of *some* of the difficulties they will face.

In preparing for the group discussion, you might ask two of the husbands in the group to give their specific, frank reactions to the article. Ask them well before the session so that they can give the matters serious thought. No matter what kind of work they do, ask them to evaluate the accuracy of Mr. Goodman's ideas from where they themselves stand in the world. As leader, you should try to prod the group constantly in considering and discussing the one overriding issue that Mr. Goodman raises, namely: "*But the question is what it means to grow up into such a fact:* 'During my productive years I will spend eight hours a day doing what is no good.' " The questions suggested for discussion have been designed not to get an argument on whether or not the statement is true, but to dig into the reasons why it is an issue.

Questions for Discussion

1. The author suggests that there are very few genuinely worth-while jobs to be found in modern America by the young man going into the employment market. Are you skeptical of this? Do you agree with it? Can you name worth-while jobs he has not mentioned? What gives them their worth?

2. Consider the plight of the teacher or the mechanic as the author outlines it. Would you suggest this occupation for your children?

3. What should parents advise their children as they begin thinking of a lifework? Has the article shown you areas not to suggest? to suggest? Why?

4. What is the main thing for a young man to look for in a job? Give your reasons.

5. Some people argue that in a culture so given to "boondoggling," the workers agree to fool themselves by calling their "boondoggling" real work. Can you agree with this argument? Have you actually agreed in the particular job you do?

6. What attitude toward work do you want your children to hold when they become workers? How are you doing in helping them to learn that attitude?

For Further Reading

1. A particularly fruitful second session might be conducted on the basis of a discussion of Alexander Miller's *Christian Faith and My Job* (Association Press, paper, 50 cents).

2. See also *Ethics in a Business Society*, by Marquis Childs and Douglass Cater. (Harper & Brothers, $2.75; New American Library, paperback, 50 cents).

3. *The Christian Round Table*, Oct.–Dec., 1957, contained two units on the significance of work. These, if available, will prove to be a helpful resource.

4. Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd* (Random House, Inc., $3.95), is a fascinating, novel, and illuminating book. It could provoke discussion that would last through several sessions.

Into a World of Tenderness and Competence

By Edgar Z. Friedenberg

Two aspects of growth that contribute most to a clear self-definition are climactic in adolescence. One of these is the capacity for tenderness toward other persons. Since tenderness is fired by sexuality and expresses a primarily sexual feeling, adults are not astonished that it should appear very strongly in the emotional spectrum of adolescence. But we are inclined to underestimate the power and the human value of adolescent love. For one thing, it frightens us and sometimes makes us more envious than we know. For another, we live in a culture which sentimentalizes children and therefore tends to lose sight of the contrasting capacity for tenderness that adolescence brings. Finally—and for reasons which we must subsequently examine rather closely—we regard many of the things and persons beloved by adolescents, including other adolescents, with scorn and utter contempt and so disregard the feeling they arouse. Adolescents tend to be passionate people, and passion is no less real because it is directed toward a hot rod, a commercialized popular singer, or the leader of a black-jacketed gang. Our exploitive mass culture makes it terribly hard for youngsters to find or even to identify appropriate objects for love; but it is the new power of adolescence to weave tenderness into the fabric of personality that produces a pattern of life not wholly cynical or expedient.

The other major development is an attitude of respect for competence. Adults often find it hard to see this in adolescent behavior, partly because they lack respect for and disapprove of the kind of competence the adolescent is seeking and partly because adolescent competence tends now to be tapped off for commercial purposes and standardized before it has had much chance to develop or to contribute to the development of the adolescent. But respect for competence in oneself and others is crucial in adolescence, for it is crucial to self-definition. In a world as empirical as ours, a youngster who does not know what he is good *at* will not be sure what he is good *for;* he must know what he can do in order to know who he is. . . .

In order to understand in detail how tenderness and competence are involved in adolescent growth, we must first establish a basis for interpreting personality development in adolescence as a general process. Because adolescent personality, especially under American social conditions, is so much affected by the feelings and relationships youngsters establish among themselves, I believe that the psychoanalytic system developed by Harry Stack Sullivan and his school will be more useful than the classical Freudian schema. I shall draw freely on Sullivan's work—particularly the *Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry* [W. W. Norton & Company, 1953]. . . .

In adolescence, other people begin to make a difference as individuals rather than as sources of support or obstructions to impulse. Shortly before the physical onset of puberty, a different quality of feeling suffuses one's perception of certain other individuals. They are loved.

Children and juveniles do not love, in this sense, because they are rarely interested in the complete personalities of other persons. Their concern is limited to what affects them; as long as their lives run according to custom, they do not care much what other people are really like. Within this area of concern their perception is acute and their judgment sound; children are traditionally known to be all but impossible to fool by cant or hypocrisy. . . .

Children give of themselves freely and have much to give; their feeling and spontaneity are a constant delight to adults. But they hardly love even their parents, much as they need them and however comforting they find them. They see parents as an indispensable institution, not as whole persons. This leads to affection, trust, and loyalty. Love is rounder and more precise.

It begins, and begins with some intensity, in early adolescence. It begins in loving someone *other* than oneself and finishes, if one is fortunate, in loving someone *different* from oneself—as different as man is from woman. The passionate attachments of earliest adolescence are between chums of the same sex. . . .

Sullivan attributes great developmental value to these attachments of early adolescence. Far from presaging homosexuality in later life, they are notably absent from the case histories of adult homosexuals. . . . Homophilic love, if not essential to ultimate heterosexual love, certainly tends to pave the way toward it and enrich it.

It does so by restoring a measure of trust in feeling, and combining this with more precise self-perception. Children and juveniles are self-centered; early ado-

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lescents, increasingly able to take others to heart, still find this easier at first if the other is not different enough to be threatening. Tenderness, when it is unfamiliar, makes us shy; and shyness dominates relationships with persons beyond our experience; if they are also shy, as girls are in early adolescence, the friendship is likely to be stillborn. Between chums of early adolescence, only tenderness itself is strange.

With love comes trust, which leads to mutual exploration and the confidence to accept intrusion. The feeling of chums in early adolescence for each other is usually their first experience of unconditional acceptance by another person. Once this is established, the two can learn about themselves from each other without the tension of the juvenile proving ground. . . .

This is a genuine therapeutic experience of unique value. Parents cannot help their children in this way, for they are too much involved in the situation which has brought about whatever damage has occurred; if it is severe, the children are quite aware that imprudent self-revelation may lead to further pain and rejection. Children and juveniles cannot help each other in this way; their relationships are too ambivalent and too incomplete. But Tom, at the age of thirteen or fourteen, can say to Dick: "Why do you always have to be such a big wheel?" or "You don't really feel that way any more; you're just trying to make something out of it!" or "That was pretty stupid, what we pulled in school yesterday!" . . . And Dick will listen to Tom, when he could hardly afford to listen to anybody else.

Dick does not have to compete with Tom; and he does not have to please him. Their commitment to each other has already been made, without any reservation or purpose of evasion. This is not to say that the friendship between them will run smoothly; it certainly will not and would be less useful if it did. Tom and Dick will fight and bear each other's wounds. Their job is not to be nice to each other, but to be real to each other.

If they are, if there are no traumatic betrayals or intercessions, Dick and Tom help each other very much. Each learns how good it feels to care about another person. Each learns much more about himself from the other; each learns that what makes the other supremely valuable to him is his *difference* from himself. Each confirms the other in masculine self-imagery; each is now ready to risk greater differences for the sake of even greater rewards. The focus of attention shifts. By this time, Dick and Tom are about ready to take Jane and Alice to a high school dance, though for the first year or so they may all prefer to double date.

If Jane and Alice are also ready to be real, the exploration and self-definition which tenderness makes possible continue in depth. Dick learns that his relationship to Jane is not a conquest but a process. As they become men and women the process becomes more complex and richer; more is involved, more is constructed, more is maintained. In mature love between adults, the process of self-definition, and clarification of the meaning of life and of one's place in it, continues and becomes more abstract. But the basis of this process remains courage to be oneself in all one's imperfection, sustained by a measure of unconditional tenderness; and this is the basis on which Tom and Dick began it together.

Despite the attention it has received, the exact role of sex in this still seems unclear and confused. In view of the amount of study that has gone into it, I cannot but believe that the terms on which we approach such questions are what preclude our getting sensible answers. We certainly know that the response of human beings to one another is not easily compartmentalized. We are all animals, and placental mammals at that; but not much insight is gained by trying to classify our feelings or behavior into the erotic and the nonerotic. . . .

In adolescence, boys and girls do, I think, respond with quite different emotions to the erotic elements in a situation, though much of this difference is culturally determined. I am not here referring to their experiences as lovers, which must obviously be different. I mean that in our society boys and girls seem to react differently to situations which are not themselves sexual but which arouse a partially erotic response. I think, too, that the way in which boys and girls differ is not what the masculine and feminine stereotypes have led us to expect. Boys, for example, seem to me usually more concerned with their appearance than girls and also to have more idea what they actually look like and how other people will respond to the way they look. Our image of a beautiful girl is so rigidly defined and constantly reiterated by every medium of communication that it has become in a sense highly impersonal. . . . Girls, therefore, are likely to approach beauty as if it were an effect to be achieved—not an *artificial* effect but still an *external* one, the invocation of a social norm which exists altogether independently of themselves. And their attitude toward the result is likely to be quite detached. A vain young woman is, in my experience, rare.

Boys, in contrast, are often very vain; and their vanity is very personal; if they are handsome, they think of their handsomeness as peculiarly their own. They dress for it specifically, not according to social norms; a well-built, sun-bronzed boy will fight like a tiger to keep his mother from getting him out of his torn T-shirt and Ivy League pants with the useful buckle in the back, and into a conservative suit designed to conceal his fearful symmetry. . . .

There is also, I think, a fairly consistent sex difference in emotional stability in adolescence; again my observations contradict the stereotype. Boys seem on the whole to be moodier, more intense, more mystical almost. The next time you go to a basketball game, watch the faces of the players as well as the play. You will see few expressions of recognizable emotion; hardly anyone ever smiles; displays of anger are more frequent, but usually occur during time-outs. What

one sees instead are moments of ecstasy and transfiguration, when the player seems as wholly concentrated within his perception of his function as a Hindu holy man. Players are trained for this, of course; but training must be suited to the kind of response of which they are capable, and adolescent boys are capable of just this piercing intensity. Of all sports, basketball seems most suited to their physical and emotional status: the tempo, which demands speed and endurance rather than crushing power; the ritual maze of regulations and penalties, carrying the definition of fair play to obsessive lengths; even the affectionate slaps on the bottom by which coaches and teammates support and reassure a player in a critical situation. . . .

But adolescence cannot be understood simply as an exercise in the development of tenderness. Other processes continue. Adolescence is distinguished from earlier stages of development by the warp of tenderness; but the tough fibers of social experience continue, as in the juvenile era, to tie the personality together. In the modern, knowledgeable adolescent, alert to the expectations of his peers and of adults, they may quite dominate the pattern. . . . Sometimes the personality is not woven from love and experience, but seems to have been knitted from one long, cool skein of know-how. The result is wonderfully silky and appealing, and conforms to every indicated contour, but it does not wear very well. One snag, and there is a tendency to run. . . .

The social dynamics of the adolescent peer group are continuations of those of the juvenile era; there is no sudden shift or sharp break. But they become subtler and less crude. The group undertakes more complex activities; a wider variety of different kinds of competence proves to be useful; greater alertness in detecting and accepting them in otherwise unpromising individuals pays off. An odd and cranky boy who can nevertheless write an editorial for the school paper so skillfully that embarrassed authority can find no grounds for censorship is not now the butt of ridicule; he is a prize. It is worth a good deal of effort to keep him, and keep him out of trouble; and it takes a good deal of skill. . . .

Adolescent judgments of what other individuals can and will do for, to, or with them are usually both sound and stable. The mistakes they make are generally due to an inability to take account of factors that are beyond their experience, though an adult might have been wary of them. They probably will not clearly understand, for example, the relationship between a high school principal and the pillars of the community who determine the policies of the board of education. They will not easily spot the less familiar character disorders in a classmate or teacher—and may seriously misjudge what he will do if the situation alters. But within the limits imposed by their inexperience they are sharp.

What differentiates their judgment most from that of the juvenile is the tremendous value adolescents place on *competence*. Competence is the foundation of autonomy; in the adolescent peer group it is respected in a variety of forms. Respect for competence is a penetrating source of discipline. In adolescence it is almost a religion, and sometimes more; I have known adolescents who had become atheists, not because they did not believe in God, but because they did, and were disgusted with the way he handled his job. Social sensivitity that is alert to competence and that bases its distinctions upon it cannot become merely snobbish or other-directed. Adolescent groups have a certain immunity to these vices, though not enough to resist them forever in a culture in which they are endemic.

The first annual Newport Jazz Festival (1954) illustrated adolescent attitudes toward competence quite clearly. It was a moving experience, and in many ways a unique one. About three quarters of the audience appeared to be adolescent and, from the accents and snatches of overheard conversation, mostly from the greater exurban area which stretches from Mercersberg to Andover. . . .

During the entire two days I saw no single example of eccentric dress or behavior, or of exhibitionism—not even of excessive rapture or devotion. Here was none of the intensity of basketball; the occasion did not demand it. But it was serious in the way I should suppose a cabinet meeting would be serious at a time when there was no special crisis. These people knew what they were there for, and they knew what they expected. . . .

Against this, to be honest, one must surely weigh in the balance the response of American youth to its sorry succession of Elvises. This is a cause for concern, but not, I think, for condemnation of adolescents. Few members of any community can survive saturation bombing, and the communications industries subject the "teen-ager" to little else. As a singer, Elvis has technical virtues, but as a social phenomenon, he is not pretty; and he does reflect the taste of the American adolescent in large numbers. But he does not reflect their free choice. Our Elvises are an infant industry, protected by the major radio, phonograph, and television companies from the competition of more specialized appeals. Doubtless, nothing better could appeal to as many "teen-agers" at once. But what is needed to foster the development of autonomy during adolescence is not something better that would appeal to as large a number of youngsters. Instead, a large number of different artistic resources are needed; each more meaningful, and each satisfied to appeal to a small number of adolescents who are able, because of the special circumstances of their individual lives, to find it meaningful. This is just what the structure of the mass media forbids.

Indeed, the desert of standardization is encroaching on the few oases that have become established. As

David Riesman has recently pointed out,[1] even those areas like jazz, which have provided adolescents with their traditional strongholds of individuality in taste and competence, are being thoroughly, if comparatively subtly, commercialized. There is less genuine individuality and variety in jazz, or hot-rodding, or photography, or anything else, as these activities develop their own house organs and require increasingly expensive equipment and intricate techniques. The *aficionado* is likely to find that he has fled from mass culture into an area of specialization in which he is no less subject to manipulation, and in which the prevailing norms are again effectively established by other persons for commercial purposes. . . .

Adolescent growth is seriously blocked by anything that keeps youngsters from responding *specifically* to one another. Our cultural insistence on *generalized* patterns of response that ignore the significance of subtle but vital human differences is one of the things that most seriously impedes adolescence. Adults may find it annoying and tiresome to fritter themselves away in superficial intercourse with charming people whom they never see very clearly and who never really notice what they are like. But in adolescence this kind of empty socialization is not merely meaningless but dangerous. In the adolescent peer group, youngsters not only teach one another; they learn one another. They learn to feel about others and about themselves, and in some cases to love. Respect for real competence—in the schoolroom, the shop, or the street; the football field or the living room; the driver's seat or the back seat of the car—respect for competence of mind, heart, and body is the trustworthy foundation on which love must be built.

I do not mean by this that people are loved for their skills; this, indeed, would be to treat man as a means rather than an end. But love must be realistic in the sense that it abjures magic and responds to the hard core of actuality in the person loved; it must be a response to the person-in-operation as a person, so to speak. Otherwise, it is not love but a sentimental fantasy aroused by manner or appearance, and often a form of illness as well.

The large, sensible insight behind coeducation is the understanding that it gives boys and girls opportunities to do things together. This discourages romance and favors love, which is a sound idea; for romance . . . should be enjoyed but must not be allowed to become necessary. But this often does not work, because the forces of triviality in modern life are stronger than those tending toward tenderness and understanding in individuals, so that what boys and girls actually get a chance to do together is not important enough to matter. Anyone could do it; the doing of it in no way expresses the unique qualities of the youngsters, who then never reveal themselves to each other. They never really experience each other as human beings.

Experience of and respect for the competence of other people establish their place in our scheme of things. It provides the connection between our feeling about them—whatever its quality—and our understanding of the processes with which we are involved. If this is essential to love, it is essential to much more as well, and much that is more immediately effective in making the world go round. . . .

DISCUSSION LEADS FOR TOPIC 5

Before the Discussion

At least two sessions should be planned on the basis of this single article. Perhaps the leader will find more useful ways to break down the article, but one obvious way would be to consider first tenderness in the adolescent world and then competence—as secrets, in both cases, that help adults to understand what goes on. Adults are regularly amazed at what goes on among their adolescents, just as their parents were amazed at them when they were in high school. A part of this amazement is due, no doubt, to a sort of pride (and reluctance to admit it) in the adolescent who has grown to be such an individual from such a tiny little baby. But the amazement should not inhibit understanding, and that is precisely where Mr. Friedenberg makes such a rich contribution. He helps adults to understand what makes adolescents go, what they are really made of.

Session I. Consider first the area of tenderness. Friedenberg's point here is that tenderness is a new possibility for the postjuvenile, the true adolescent. He points out that adolescents are capable of deep attachments, to members of the same and of the opposite sex. As he puts it, "[Love] begins in loving someone *other* than oneself and finishes, if one is fortunate, in loving someone *different* from oneself—as different as man is from woman." The author seems to be saying that adolescents find it within their power to see another person whole, as a whole outside person, and to learn how to trust, be considerate toward, and honor him. That is a great achievement. It makes adolescent life, to the adolescent, seem much more wonderful than it may appear to adults.

Friedenberg notes that the specific tenderness adolescents begin to experience (if they are fortunate) is intense and passionate and exclusive—between two of them. Tenderness shows up as the ability of the adolescent to take his chum (or sweetheart) absolutely as he is, and at the same time to exercise a real courage in continuing to be just the imperfect adolescent that he actually is. Seen in its essence, such tenderness, which lies perhaps out of the understanding of the adult observer, renders the adolescent world meaningful. If parents were to know that it is happening, perhaps they might grow to a new respect for their child and his enormous personal achievement. And the parents who do not know what is going on, the

[1] "Listening to Popular Music," in *Individualism Reconsidered and Other Essays* (The Free Press, 1954).

author contends, have been roped out by the adolescent who does not trust and, hence, cannot be tender with his parents—due largely, it is suggested, to childhood experiences that have engendered distrust.

The author's remarks about boys *as* boys and girls *as* girls remind adults that what they have been taught to believe about adolescents is largely not so. Note his appraisal of male vanity. Adolescents are very local and concrete in their observations. They see each other as separate entities and evaluate each entity scrupulously. That cannot be said for adults who are given to lumping all adolescents into two groups: boys and girls, stereotyped groups at that, and letting the matter thus stand. One of the strong, leading, practical considerations for parents emerges just at this point of seeing each adolescent for what he, just he alone, really is and respecting him for all he is.

Session II. Consider next the area of competence. Competence is allied to tenderness, but, nonetheless, it has a unique value. The adolescent, in his sophisticated group relations (sophisticated when compared to childhood group relations), is keen and alert to people and to their ability to perform, to operate, to function. This is often harsh and occasionally unsound because of limited experience, but always shrewd and open-eyed. The adolescent knows what another person can do, doesn't try to fool himself or the other person. This kind of hard-core, down-to-the-facts approach to life often seems cruel, especially to the person of doubtful competence, and may occasionally seem to reward the wrong kind of competence. But, as Friedenberg insists, it furnishes the adolescent with a frank estimate of himself and teaches him to evaluate others at the most crucial telling point: Can he deliver the goods?

Adults who can go backward into their *real* memories (not made-up misty memories) of adolescence may be able to feel what it is like to be not yet an adult, to have not yet reached that point where polite sayings are acceptable, and harsh, true estimates of fellow adults are considered crude. Adolescents, because they are not yet adults and yet are more than juveniles, can make these sound judgments and can learn, as the judgments on their own worth are favorable, what it means to feel like a competent person. That is the point the author wants us to see. If not overly upset or infected by the phoniness of the adult world (recall his remarks on Elvis and on the commercialized areas of specialty competence), the adolescent can come to terms with who he is, what he can do, and what he is worth.

It is precisely the person who has no true sense of his own value, who has no one to say, *out loud,* that he is good at something, or really good, or that he "stinks," that is the person who is ever walking on internal egg shells.

The article thus leads parents to see the importance of allowing adolescents, with their native sharpness, to form their own estimates. This means that the boy who calls another boy an incompetent drip should not be called down for being uncharitable. It also means that the boy who has been called an incompetent drip should not be defeated at the crucial moment by parents who tell him that it isn't so at all. If he is incompetent, he needs to know it and be accepted as he is, not fed lies about what he is *not.*

The article also leads parents to treasure the honesty, the budding self-assurance, the growing independence of the adolescent. The adolescent may be bizarre; he may dress peculiarly and employ words that sound like Hindustani, but that is his way, and, in allowing him to follow his way, the parent shall have honored both his capacity for tenderness and his awareness of competence.

Questions for Discussion

Session I.

1. Consider the author's comments on the difference between love and romance. What constitutes the main difference between them? Is love, as opposed to romance, a genuine possibility for adolescents of your acquaintance?

2. What exactly does Mr. Friedenberg mean when he uses the word "tenderness"? Does his usage of the word vary from the normal usage?

3. The article points to the greater vanity of the adolescent boy over the adolescent girl. How well does this describe the vanity of boys and girls you have known? Which are the more vain? Why is it important for parents to understand this point?

4. The school very likely thinks that the major achievements of adolescence are scholastic, athletic, and social achievements. The article seems to think that the achievement of true tenderness should also be placed among these *major* achievements. Consider together what you believe to be *the* major achievement of which an adolescent is capable. What do the adolescents themselves put in first place; what, that is, receives their greatest attention and concentrated effort?

5. In what ways might the church minister to the adolescent, helping him to grow to tenderness? What part can parents play?

Session II.

1. For parents, one of the disquieting sides of the development of competence and respect for competence in the adolescent is the adolescent's critical, open-eyed evaluation of his own parents. How much of his critical judgment of parents is defiance and how much is simple candor?

2. The author suggests that the respect for competence and the ability to evaluate competence come from the adolescent's ability to see people whole for what they can *do.* Why does the author consider this ability such a significant development?

3. Often a child grows through adolescence to adulthood without ever really knowing his own competence. How might parents help in this vital area of self-discovery? Should they help?

4. What do you most respect adolescents for? least respect them for? (Discuss adolescents of your mutual knowledge.)

5. Consider this situation: A boy has come home feeling shaken up by what he considered a cruel remark by some of his friends. The boy was told that he looked, acted, and operated like a girl. Should the parents comfort their son? agree with the accusers? maintain neutrality? Which course of parental action would mean most to the boy?

For Further Reading

It is strongly urged that parents read carefully the whole book from which this article has been taken: *The Vanishing Adolescent,* by Edgar Z. Friedenberg (The Beacon Press, Inc., $2.95). It offers an excellent perspective on the adolescent world, the adolescent himself, and some of the complicating forces within society at large that complicate the adolescent's life, and it can serve as the basis for many additional discussions.

Over the Crossroads Desk

New Editor Appointed to CROSSROADS

ADVANCED publication schedules make impossible the proper introductions at the proper time. Since September 1, 1960, Rev. Lindell L. Sawyers has been editor of CROSSROADS and *Westminster Adult Leader*. However, the adult magazines appearing in the meantime, including the present one, represent the work of his predecessor, Rev. John R. Fry. Mr. Sawyers' work will not begin to appear until the summer issue, and his planning will not show up decisively until sometime during the coming year.

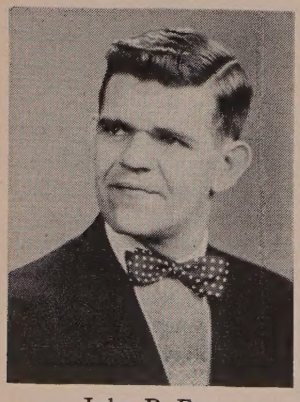
Mr. Sawyers, our new editor, is a graduate of the University of Chicago. His theological training was received at the same institution. Graduate work there led him first into the area of philosophy, and then into education. His master's thesis was written on the subject of "An Appraisal of the Adult Education Program of a Local Church."

He was born in Springfield, Illinois, and comes to us from the position of associate pastor in the First Presbyterian Church of Hammond, Indiana. He has been active in the Christian education planning of his presbytery and has been the presbytery chairman of the committee on Christian education.

Lindell L. Sawyers

Mr. Sawyers is an excellent writer, who had already contributed to the *Christian Faith and Life* curriculum before joining the staff. His interest in adult education, including new methods of teaching, is intense. He is married to Ruth Lowry Sawyers, a professional musician who, before her husband came to CROSSROADS, was on the voice faculty of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

We have reason to expect new developments in CROSSROADS and *Leader* during the next few years. We welcome Mr. Sawyers to the Board of Christian Education staff and wish him well as he faces the challenge of adult editorial work. Not only in what is printed, but in all the adult education undertaken by this Board, his influence will be felt.



John R. Fry

Mr. Fry, the former editor of CROSSROADS and *Leader*, became Associate Adult Editor in January, 1956. His promotion to the editorship came in April, 1959. He left us to assume editorial duties with *Presbyterian Life*. Before he left, however, he had acquired a reputation for brilliance, and the adult magazines under his leadership reflected this quality. The Board of Christian Education is grateful for his imagination and his labors and rejoices that his editorial skills are still at work.

CROSSROADS has been fortunate in its principal editors—Rev. George L. Hunt, Mr. Fry, and now Mr. Sawyers. Much of the quality of the magazine must be credited also to Rev. Jack M. MacLeod, who has for several years been an associate in this editorial work.

Norman F. Langford

EDITOR IN CHIEF

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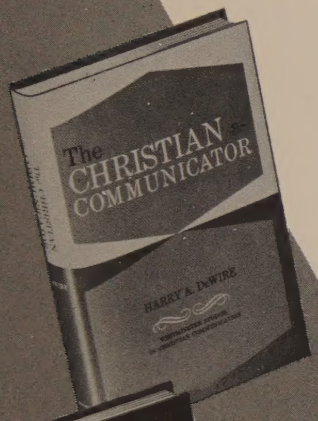
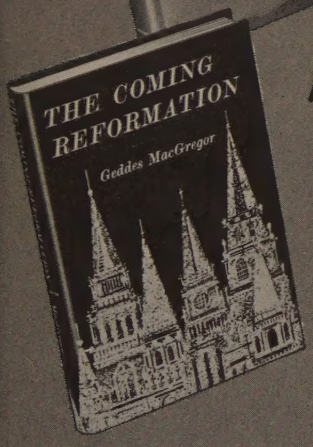
through personal witness...

THE CHRISTIAN AS COMMUNICATOR

By Harry A. DeWire

The author says that every member of Christ's body, being a priest in the fellowship, not only may, but is obliged to bear witness. Moreover, the sort of witness needed goes beyond a mere invitation to "go to church with me." Dr. DeWire believes that witnessing consists of speech, most certainly, but it also consists of many other things, including silence. There is no formula for all occasions, no pattern to apply, no bag of tricks. Above all overt acts and words, the Christian's primary witness is in *being a Christian.* What he is speaks louder than anything he can say. When something more is needed, the nature of that something will appear. In every case he may be quite relaxed, knowing that his responsibility ends with providing the occasion for the result—the result itself being in God's hands alone. $4.50





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